REPORT RESUMES

ED 015 172 TE 000 004

THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE, GRADES 7-12.
BY- WARD, WILLIAM S. CRABB, ALFRED L., JR.
KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH,LOUISVILLE

PUB DATE 66
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.50 HC-$3.32 81P.

DESCRIPTORS- *ENGLISH INSTRUCTION, *LITERATURE GUIDES, *LITERATURE PROGRAMS, *SECONDARY EDUCATION, AUDIOVISUAL AIDS, BIOGRAPHIES, BOOK REVIEWS, ESSAYS, NOVELS, POETRY, SHORT STORIES, DRAMA, KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH,

THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF THE KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH PRODUCED A REPORT ON THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE, GRADES SEVEN THROUGH 12, WITH CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING APPRECIATION, PERCEPTION, AND A CRITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LITERATURE. FOLLOWING AN OVERVIEW WHICH ASSESSES THE DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE AND ITS PLACE IN A LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM, THE GUIDE IS DIVIDED INTO SECTIONS ON EACH OF THE FOLLOWING LITERARY GENRES--SHORT STORY, NOVEL, DRAMA, POETRY, BIOGRAPHY, ESSAY, AND ARTICLE. SECTIONS CONTAIN ACCOUNTS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TYPES IN RELATION TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERATURE PROGRAM, WORKABLE DEFINITIONS OF THE GENRES, LISTINGS AND EXPLANATIONS OF POINTS TO CONSIDER IN THE STUDY OF EACH GENRE, AND GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PRESENTATION TO STUDENTS OF VARYING ABILITIES. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GENRE IS GIVEN FOR THE BIOGRAPHY AND THE ESSAY. IN ADDITION, EACH SECTION INCLUDES EXEMPLARY TEACHING UNITS, BUILT AROUND GENERALLY FAMILIAR AND READILY AVAILABLE LITERARY SELECTIONS, FOR BOTH JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS. AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS AND SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS ARE LISTED. ALSO PRESENTED IS A VARIETY OF SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING BOOK REPORTS CHALLENGING, CREATIVE, AND EXCITING FOR STUDENTS. THIS REPORT APPEARED IN "KENTUCKY ENGLISH BULLETIN," VOLUME 16, FALL 1966. (DL)

ED015172

Kentucky English Bulletin

THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE
Grades 7-12

Volume 16 Fall 1966 Number 1

TE 000 004

Published by the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English

Kentucky English Bulletin

Member NCTE Information Exchange Agreement

Volume 16 Fall, 1966 Number 1

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor
WILLIAM S. WARD
University of Kentucky

Associate Editor
ALFRED L. CRABB, JR.
University of Kentucky

TE 000 004

CONTENTS

The Teaching of Literature, Grades 7-12

An Overview 4
Short Stories 8
Novels 17
Drama 26
Poetry 44
Biography 55
Essays 66
Articles 71
Book Reports 77

Published by the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English, with the cooperation and assistance of the Department of English, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Kentucky.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles are invited and should be submitted to the editor.

SUBSCRIPTION: Subscription to the *Bulletin* is included in the annual membership dues ($1), which should be sent to Mr. Gerald L. Riedling, Kentucky Southern College, Louisville, Kentucky.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE, GRADES 7-12

A Report of the Committee on Standards Kentucky Council of Teachers of English

FOREWORD

> The study of literature must remain at the heart of the English curriculum in the secondary schools, for it is only through a literature-centered program that the course in English retains its identity as a humanistic experience.[1]

The recent emphasis on science and mathematics has tended to increase interest in technical subject areas and to decrease interest in the fine arts. This trend has fortunately forced many curriculum makers and teachers of English to re-evaluate course content and to re-examine their approaches to the teaching of literature.

To challenge each child is but one of the numerous obligations confronting teachers of literature. Students in grades 7-12 still must be taught to appreciate literature and to develop keener perceptions as they identify with imaginary characters in real situations; they must also be taught to receive pleasure from their reading while learning to live with themselves and others. In addition, teachers must strive to develop a realistic literature literacy while encouraging contemporary secondary students to explore wildernesses, probe the mysteries of science, and deal with simulated problems of life.

A variety of approaches face literature teachers as they deal with universal human emotions (love, hate, gladness, grief) through universal human experiences (growing up, getting married, making decisions, groping for a meaning of life, and eventually dying)—all of these structured by a writer into a specific literary type.

This committee's task was to consider all these problems and to produce a report of concrete suggestions for the teaching of literature, grades 7-12.

The committee devoted much time to discussing the most appropriate and effective way of organizing the report. Since the teaching of literature covers many areas and adapts itself to a wide variety of approaches, the junior and senior high school students.

---

[1] Dwight L. Burton, *Literature Study in the High School,* Revised Edition, (New York: Holt, 1964), p. v.

The last two sections of the bulletin describe a variety of ways of reporting on books assigned as outside reading and list a short but very selective bibliography on the teaching of literature.

TEACHING LITERATURE: AN OVERVIEW

APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

Numerous approaches to the study of literature are possible. The most commonly used methods are listed below, with a succinct description of each.

Following an Anthology

"Organizing the literature program according to an anthology may seem too obvious to list, but any honest analysis of classroom practice must place this method of organization first in frequency."[1] This device members decided to present their findings according to the following general plan.

The first section is devoted to listing and discussing the most familiar approaches to the teaching of literature: following an anthology, using the chronological approach, studying by types, reading individual selections, organizing material through themes, and using a combination of the above.

The next section is concerned with details of the plans actually developed in the report, emphasizing the importance of flexibility, adapting materials to satisfy individual differences of students, and using the study of literature to teach skills of listening, speaking, and writing.

Inasmuch as the genre approach to a study of literature could best be adapted to other ways of teaching literature, the committee decided to present the major part of the report as a discussion of teaching by types. Sections devoted to each literary type include a description of a general teaching plan with specific examples of appropriate selections for both follows page-by-page the adopted textbook with little or no regard for other plans.

Making Use of a Chronological Survey

This method, used particularly at eleventh and twelfth grade levels, presents literature from the standpoint of the time it was written, emphasizing the historical development of literature.

---

[1] Dwight L. Burton, ***Literature Study in the High School***, Revised Edition, (New York: Holt, 1964) p. 258.

Studying by Types

Studying literature by types or genres is an old, familiar pattern, particularly popular in grades nine and ten. This approach presents literature from the standpoint of the type represented by selections chosen: short story, novel, poetry, drama, biography, and various forms of non-fiction.

Reading in Individual Selections

Once a very popular method, this device disappeared for a number of years but with the advent of comparatively inexpensive paperbacks has returned to the scene. Here individual teachers choose specified selections to be studied more or less in depth. This has been particularly popular in "honors" courses.

Organizing Material Through Themes

> Although it represents a fairly new concept of teaching, the underlying idea of a thematic unit is basically simple: to unify a group of literary materials through a concept, idea, human experience, or theme. A variety of types may be used, and literature of many periods and countries may be included.
>
> Frequently, a three-phase plan can be used. Phase one presents a core of materials to the entire class; phase two presents those works which are read by groups; phase three introduces works of literature which are read individually.
>
> The literature itself must be stressed, and the point of emphasis should always be the expression of the theme in the works studied. A few broad themes are decided upon, and units of study are developed that are based on particular literary works that lend themselves to the development of the theme.[2]

Obviously, these methods may be used in various combinations. The thematic organization is popular at the moment and seems to be a sensible, workable way of making the study of literature a rich experience in living for junior and senior high school boys and girls. The types approach has been chosen for detailed analysis later in this bulletin only because it lends itself to this kind of presentation and because this method will be used in any of the other approaches.

PLANNING THE PROGRAM

This booklet contains a discussion of ways to teach the major genres of literature: short story, novel, drama, poetry, biography, essay, and article. Whenever appropriate, the presentation includes an account of the significance of the type in relation to the secondary school literature program; a workable definition of the genre; a listing and explanation of points to consider in the study of each phase; and general suggestions for presentation.

---

[2] "Honors English," *Kentucky English Bulletin*, Winter, 1963-64, p. 13.

The general plan is followed by two specific plans, one for teaching the type at the junior high school level and the other at the senior high school level. These plans utilize the overall plan previously discussed. In most instances, selections chosen for detailed analysis are familiar and readily available.

It is impossible, of course, to devise a plan for teaching any literary selection which will be adaptable for all teachers and students. Persons using the plans presented here will need to consider them in terms of their own experiences and the intellectual and maturity level of the students whom they teach. Though it is essential to have a definite plan for presenting a literature program as well as individual selections, the teacher must realize that the plans should allow for flexibility.

PROVIDING FOR FLEXIBILITY

The age and ability level of the students will help to determine the choice of both genre and individual selections. Whenever possible, it is advisable to parallel literature study with what is going on in other classes; for example, the short story as an art form will have particular meaning when American history is being studied, and world literature and world history provide perfect complements.

Assignments will vary according to the readiness of the students. Flexibility is necessary to allow for differences in a student's potential and for a particular order of presentation. The teacher should always focus on the way imaginative literature sharpens observation, allows for vicarious experience, and presents the most basic questions about humanity.

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

All teachers must adapt materials to satisfy individual differences among students. The better student may respond to depth of feeling and thought. The poorer student may respond solely to the narrative of a good story, novel, poem, or play. In a class where the ability to read and comprehend varies from the fourth grade to college level, the teacher must be able to provide reading material for all. The student who reads and understands what he is reading will continue to read. As his ability develops, he moves to the next level. Even though in some cases his ability may fall short of expectation, he will be reading with greater accuracy and appreciation than ever before.

A major goal of the reading program should be to make the student an independent reader. Different reading programs within a single class are effective for the better student and for the poorer one. In adapting the reading program for either group, the teacher must make possible the active participation of each student. Only then will he have the opportunity to develop to the extent of his potential. This concern for individual differences will also be manifest in the planning and execution of activities to parallel reading.

INVOLVING ALL LANGUAGE ARTS

Teaching skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading should not be separated from the teaching of literature; indeed the study of literature provides a genuine motivation for the study of the mechanics of English. Spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation, outlining, and sentence structure will become more meaningful and exciting when related to what literary artists have created.

When he is given an opportunity to analyze a literary selection, the student knows that he must express himself effectively. When he reads his composition to other members of the class, he is sharing his observation and experience. In order to do this well, he must pay special attention to logical order. This makes outlining a meaningful part of writing. When the teacher evaluates written work, he has an opportunity to direct the student's attention to particular weaknesses in his ability to communicate. Written assignments will vary in length and subject matter according to the ability of the student.

Effective, practical oral activities will be precipitated by reading worthwhile literature. Audio-visual materials will furnish further motivation for worthwhile experiences in speaking and listening.

Studying new words in context will increase the student's interest in vocabulary. He will become aware of words and hopefully will increase his own speaking and writing vocabulary.

An effective literature program for secondary school students will emerge when teachers consider the physical and intellectual maturity of the students and present material commensurate with this maturity, when they realize that the program must be thoroughly planned with ample provisions for creativity and flexibility, when they utilize the study of literature to motivate learning in all aspects of the English program, and when their own love for good literature is so contagious that students will want to continue to explore and evaluate the many values inherent in the great literary selections of the world.

TEACHING THE SHORT STORY

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

The short story is the outstanding contribution of America to the world of literature. First defined by Edgar Allan Poe, the short story has remained a literary favorite with Americans. Short stories are readily available in countless magazines and anthologies. Read on different levels, the same story can challenge the advanced reader and offer satisfying enjoyment to the reluctant reader. From the study of the short story, the student may gain insights to and understandings of himself and others. Furthermore, the student may become familiar with techniques and styles of fiction before he attempts longer and more difficult works. The short story holds a secure place in literature and in the English program.

Definition of the Genre

Following are two definitions of the short story which seem quite accurate.

> Yet within this unity [of the novel] of man's birth, achievements, and death are many lesser unities, not the less complete because they may be regarded as parts of a whole. The hopeless love which binds together a few episodes of some otherwise not extra-ordinary life into a significant story; the unexpected situation quickly developing, quickly passing away, these are the strands which can be drawn from the web of possible experiences. The term 'short story' as it is used in current writing and speech does not mean a story which merely happens to be short; it is applied to the narrative which covers such a lesser unity. A lesser unity of the kind I have described makes the substance of a short story; the form is what such a subject demands; a brief narrative, all of whose constituent parts unite to make a single impression upon the mind of the reader.[1]
>
> A short story rather is the study of two parts of the same hero, one part of him at war with another.[2]

A comment on the changes that the short story has experienced is made by J. N. Hook in *Writing Creatively*.

> From 1910 to 1940 the popular short stories, such as appeared in the widely circulated magazines, tended to stress plot, as indeed they still do. But the more artistic ones of this period had little plot and much characterization. Many of them were in effect psychological studies, showing a character during an especially significant moment or moments of his life. Some highly experimental stories were com-

---

[1] Henry Seidel Canby and Alfred Dashiell, *A Study of the Short Story*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), pp. 1-2.

[2] Don M. Wolfe, *Creative Ways to Teach English: Grades 7-12*, (New York: Odyssey Press, 1958), p. 63.

parable to abstract paintings, with a design and an impact that could be perceived only with the most careful scrutiny.

Today's short stories refuse to fit any formula. The most literary magazines have been tending toward blends of plot, theme, setting, and characterization, with emphasis most often still on character, but less so than in the often plotless psychological studies of some years ago.[3]

Points to Consider

Many points may be considered and emphasized in the presentation of the short story. All of the elements mentioned hereafter will not occur in every short story.

Structure—In considering structure, the teacher can emphasize the mechanical features of the story—conflict, plot, episode, climax, and resolution. The point should be made that without a problem or conflict a story does not exist. The plot of the story concerns the major character's attempts to overcome this problem, whether it is physical or mental, internal or external. This plot may also be composed of a number of episodes or smaller conflicts which, though somewhat complete in themselves, are related to each other.

At or near the end, the climax, the point at which the outcome is obvious, is usually easily detected. The question posed by the conflict or plot is answered in the climax. The fact that the climax in good stories is very near the end should be noted. While the resolution tends to bring the story to a smooth close, the bad effect of a lengthy resolution can easily be observed.

Another consideration is that of a suitable ending. Often there will be the comment, "I didn't like this story because it didn't end right." Earlier reading and television and movie viewing have caused the high school student to expect the romantic ending, regardless of its logical qualities. The teacher, therefore, may point out that the concluding incidents or statements must be logical in relation to what has preceded them. The plot summary exercises suggested in Burton's *Literature Study in the High School*[4] provide good practice in recognition of quality endings.

After the student becomes aware of these elements of structure, he will see that the short story follows a somewhat constant form.

Characterization—The student should be informed of the methods used by an author to create character. These can be broadly classified as what the character says, what the character does, and what others, including the author, say about the character.

---

[3] J. N. Hook, *Writing Creatively*, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1963), p. 180.

[4] Dwight L. Burton, *Literature Study in the High Schools*, Revised Edition, (New York: Holt, 1964).

While some stories depend heavily on characterization, it is scanty in others. This is not to say that either is inferior to the other. The author's purpose usually determines the importance of characterization. Where character is significant, students may be asked to write a comment based on information gathered throughout the story on the type of person a certain character was. It is not enough to have the student say a character was brave; he should be able to substantiate this judgment. Similarly, when little characterization is done, the student may be asked to justify such lack.

Mood or Tone—One cannot read many lines of a well-written short story without consciously or unconsciously concluding that the author intends it to be a serious or light treatment, formal or informal. Consequently, the teacher should call attention to the words the author uses to set the mood. What type of picture does he create? How did the reader respond to the first few words? What is the author's attitude toward what he is writing?

Setting—The author's use of setting or the absence of a specific setting can be a point for discussion. Many short story writers use setting to intensify the mood of the story. Because of the universality of the theme in some stories—such as "The Lottery" and "The Portable Phonograph"—no specific setting is necessary; in others—such as "Flight" or "Two Soldiers"—the setting adds directly to the mood or is a part of a regional story that could hardly have happened elsewhere.

Point of View—After the teacher has made clear the definition, advantages, and disadvantages of first- and third-person points of view, he might find appropriate a discussion of the reason for and desirability of the point of view used. Faulkner, in telling "Two Soldiers" in the first person from the point of view of the younger brother, added humor, sincerity, and pathos to his story. Willa Cather used the third-person, omniscient point of view in "The Sculptor's Funeral." In addition to recording her characters' words, actions, and movements, she also revealed their thoughts and emotions.

Style—Because each author is an individual, his style is usually distinctive. The characteristic twists, excessive occurrence of didacticism, complete absence of didacticism, prevalence of particular tone and philosophy, the constant use of certain character types, constant use of certain themes, consistent use of a particular format (e.g., O Henry), and characteristics of vocabulary tend to reveal the writing personality of the author.

Purpose—The teacher might indicate that while many stories have no purpose other than to entertain, others express a serious idea or commentary on life. Some stimulating activities can be instigated by stories with themes that the students can relate to their own lives. If the student is given a chance to refute or substantiate the theme of a short story, he will see that some of the conditions of his own life are similar if not identical to those which the author mentions.

Classification—A story may be classified as realistic or romantic after the student is aware of the difference. A definition of each classification should be presented and explained by the teacher. These definitions should then be reinforced by examples. After the student understands these terms, assignments requiring him to classify specific stories and to justify his classifications are provocative.

Philosophies and Techniques—Various literary philosophies and techniques should also be indicated. Students should be taught to recognize such literary philosophies as naturalism and determinism and such literary techniques as symbolism and suspense.

General Suggestions

Fact Retention—Ideally the teacher might prefer to discuss many of the previously mentioned elements without emphasizing retention of numerous facts. However, one of the objects of teaching literature is to increase skill in reading, and this can be done to some extent by having the students recall the simple facts of the story. It is conceivable that this may be the only type of question some can answer.

Supplementary Study—The study of the short story is a springboard for supplementary learning. When an entire class is studying a short story by a particular writer, the better students might read other works by the same author. By so doing they can discern for themselves the style of the author, the prevalent themes of his writings, and other characteristic elements. Further research on the background of the author provides the students with some of the reasons for a particular view of the author and his qualifications for writing the story. While an author may write fiction, he quite often in his writing reveals his biography. Reports on literary philosophies and techniques may be rewarding. An assignment in which the student relates an idea such as determinism to his own life may be stimulating.

The Development of the American Short Story (A146 SR-SVE), a series of four filmstrips and two records, may be effectively used for motivation or summary.

Adaptation to Levels—The teacher should assign for outside reading other stories by an author that most nearly reach the student's capability. When possible, the teacher should correlate the subject of a short story with the interests of the student to whom it is assigned.

Slower students should know or understand more obvious, less interpretative facts in the story. The better student should be challenged with some difficult questions. In testing, the teacher should provide a variety of questions which will permit the slower student to show that he has read the story and is aware of certain events in the story.

Motivation—A pertinent, provocative statement or question on the day the assignment is made may interest the class in reading the story. Unusual, even though insignificant, bits of information about the author sometimes stimulate reluctant readers. Tests at the beginning of the period for which a story has been assigned may encourage careful, regular, thorough preparation.

Selection of Stories—If the selection in an anthology is not extensive enough or if an anthology is not used, the teacher should carefully choose suitable titles for further reading. In order to recognize the differences in the quality of short stories, students may read on various levels in literary and popular magazines as well as in short story collections. The teacher should not underrate the ability of his students to cope with the better stories. Many will achieve a degree of confidence when they see that these stories are about life and people very much like the life they are living and the people they know.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *THE OPEN WINDOW* AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Introduction

"The Open Window" by Saki should be read first for the enjoyment of a good story. The tone—sharp and dry—is often a new and exciting experience for students.

Before assigning the story, the teacher may call attention to the fact that Saki, the pen name of H. H. Munro, has its origin in "The Rubaiyat." He should tell students that this story requires reading between the lines, catching implications.

Reading

The story is short and may be assigned as outside reading. Some students will miss the point, but class discussion which follows will assure their understanding.

Points to Consider

Structure—The plot moves swiftly and is revealed primarily by conversation. The conflict between Vera and Framton Nuttel reaches its climax when the three appear at the window, and the resolution follows quickly.

To clarify what happened, three students may take the parts of

Framton Nuttel, Mrs. Sappleton, and Vera and recount the happenings of the afternoon from that character's point of view—Framton telling of the weird and inexplicable events, Mrs. Sappleton describing the peculiar stranger who visited her and left without a word, and Vera telling what really happened.

The teacher should call attention to the flashback in the third paragraph.

The reader may then examine the way in which Saki kept him from guessing the ending. Students will point out the questions Vera asks Framton, her convincing story of the "tragedy," Mrs. Sappleton's casual and cheerful manner, and Vera's horror at seeing the three enter the open window.

Characterization—In this story, character is revealed by conversation and author comment. The contrast between the character of Framton (dull, unimaginative, "nice," stiff, nervous) and the character of Vera (clever, shrewd, imaginative) is important to an understanding of Saki's point. The teacher may ask students to identify character traits of each and support their generalization with a specific reference to the story.

Tone—Questions by the teacher should lead the students to see that the tone is not in keeping with the tragic story Vera tells. The students should be asked to point out clues to Saki's sharp, whimsical tone.

Style—The author's style is terse; no word is wasted. Attention to the last two paragraphs (the way the author lets the reader know Vera invented the "tragedy") should help students see a master storyteller at work.

More sophisticated students may be able to appreciate the author's humor in such expressions as "when she judged that they had had sufficient silent communion" and "who labored under the tolerably widespread delusion that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the last detail of one's ailments and infirmities, their cause and cure."

Purpose—Having characterized Framton Nuttel and identified the author's tone, students should be able to see that Saki is satirizing the dull and unimaginative people in the world.

General Suggestions

Supplementary Reading—Students who enjoyed "The Open Window" may be directed to other types of stories by Saki such as "Shredni Vashtar" and "The Interlopers." The teacher should provide an opportunity for students to say how these stories differ.

Writing Activities—Students may write character sketches of Vera, Framton, and Mrs. Sappleton. Better students may wish to write their own story with a surprise ending.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY" AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Introduction

Somerset Maugham is ranked by many critics as a great modern short story writer. Most anthologies of English literature contain one of his stories. For further study, "The Door of Opportunity" has many potentialities, not the least of which is its exemplification of the author's technique. Published in 1933 in the collection entitled *Ah King*, it is one of twenty-four short stories in Walter Havighurst's *Masters of the Modern Short Story*, which "aims to be a collection of the best works of the foremost short story writers in English at the present time."

The problems in this story are universal and contemporary. Petty jealousies and vanities have always been a corrupting influence in people. The struggle between nations for power is a destructive force today. Lack of understanding among races and diverse political ideologies are producing conflict at the present time.

Preparation

To arouse the interest of the students, the teacher may introduce a discussion of the different ways in which a man or woman may show courage in everyday life. He may ask one or more provocative questions: "Does a woman show courage when she stands by a man who is held in general disgrace?" "Can extreme fastidiousness in dress, manners, or tastes sometimes be a cover-up for a feeling of insecurity or inferiority?" "If a man is faced with a responsibility in which the odds are seemingly against him, does he show cowardice or wisdom in refusing to meet it until he feels himself adequately prepared?"

The class may read the life of Maugham. Reports may be assigned on the duties of a District Officer in a British colony and on the life and literary career of Maugham.

Reading

The class may read "The Door of Opportunity" as an outside assignment. Students may keep in mind and prepare to answer these questions: What "opportunities" are offered in this story? Does Alban accept these "opportunities"? In acting as he does, does Alban show courage or cowardice?

Points to Consider

The teacher will endeavor to bring out at least some of the following points in class discussion.

Structure—The plot structure of "The Door of Opportunity" illustrates the author's favorite technique of writing a story in frames. Incidents in Tilbury and London take place in the English frame. The first transitional incident, Alban's leaving the hotel room in London, links the English to the Malayan frame, where the plot develops. Incidents leading to and following the crucial experience in Daktar take place in the Malayan frame. The second transitional incident, Alban's return to the hotel room, takes the action back to the English frame for the denouement in which Anne Torel leaves Alban.

Minor conflicts exist between the Torels and the native and government representatives in Malaya. A conflict exists between Alban and Oakley, Alban and his wife, Alban and the Governor. Oakley, Anne, and the Governor think that Alban shows cowardice in refusing to go immediately to the aid of the rubber plantation overseer who was attacked by Chinese coolies. Anne's former love for her husband and her disgust following the above incident cause an inner conflict. Alban's fear of confronting the riot on the rubber estate is in conflict with the perfection of character which he has heretofore seemingly possessed. When he refuses to go to the aid of those defending the Alud Estate, the conflict reaches its climax. Anne sees Alban's life as a sham: all of his love of art and music, his fastidiousness in dress, his disdain for other people are a pretense, a cover-up of his basic cowardice. Students will see that Anne's leaving Alban is a logical ending in relation to what has preceded it.

Characterization—Maugham portrays character in a variety of ways. Two examples of direct description are Alban's regular features, straight nose, and thin lips and Stratton's red face and hearty manner. Alban's character is revealed by conversation and action in the initial incident, the report of the rebellion, Stratton's proposal, and his conference with the Governor.

Interaction between characters takes place between Alban and Anne, Alban and Oakley, Alban and the Governor. Alban gives Anne, Oakley, Stratton, and the Governor flashing insight into his character. The contrast of the fastidious grooming of Alban Torel with the slovenly dress of the other Englishmen is an essential element in his portrait.

Tone—The author's tone and attitude toward his characters are ironical. Since Maugham is an observer rather than a judge of men, he regards the Alban Torels throughout our world with eyes of wisdom and accepts their defects with a shrug of his tolerant shoulders.

Setting—The setting is in Tilbury and London, England, and in Daktar in the Malay Peninsula between the two World Wars. The atmosphere in Daktar is exotic.

Point of View—The point of view is, in the main, the third person omniscient. As Anne Torel critically reviews all the events which have made imperative their return to London, the point of view becomes secondarily the limited third person.

Style—Maugham's aims in writing are lucidity, simplicity, and euphony. He uses colloquial language effectively: "play to the gallery" and "a pretty kettle of fish." He uses figurative language infrequently. His writing is characterized by occasional cliches: "iron hand in the velvet glove."

Purpose—Somerset Maugham's twofold purpose in writing "The Door of Opportunity" was to entertain and to depict life realistically. He deals with questions of strength and weakness, of success and failure. He shows that life can be either well lived or poorly lived and that it contains problems and complexities. In short, he stimulates thought in the minds of his readers, young and old alike.

Six stories of the Malay States, published under the title of *Ah King* in 1933, have a familiar Maugham theme: men under emotional stress do not behave predictably like chemicals in a test tube but often in an unanticipated and startling fashion.

Classification—"The Door of Opportunity" is a realistic short story, although the atmosphere in Daktar becomes exotic with romantic overtones.

Philosophy—"The tragedy of life is not that men perish but that they cease to love." In this statement from *The Summing Up,* Somerset Maugham displays a feeling of compassion for men like Alban Torel. His reflections on the philosophy of determinism enabled him to see extenuating circumstances back of the sins of men. "What has chiefly struck me in human beings," he wrote, "is their lack of consistency. The determinist thinks you cannot take a step that is not motivated by what you are at the moment; and that you are not only your muscles, your nerves, and your entrails and your brain; you are your habits, your opinions, and your dress."

General Suggestions

Supplementary Reading—Better students may familiarize themselves with other writings by Maugham, such as *Of Human Bondage, Cakes and Ale, The Summing Up,* "The Verger," and "Louise."

Oral Activities—A panel discussion on a subject such as the following will be valuable: Was Alban's refusal to take ten men to quell the rebellion merely common sense?

Writing Activities—Students may write a theme on one of the following subjects:

Fear—An Instinct?
The Artist Versus the Man of Action
Alban Torel and Governor Hannay—A Contrast
Alban Torel and John F. Kennedy—A Contrast

Captain Stratton and Van Hasseldt
Anne Torel and Mrs. Hannay
The Torels
Alban Torel's Philosophy of Life
A Sequel
The White Man in the Orient
A Character Sketch
My Brother's Keeper

Vocabulary—The teacher may assign the following provincialisms and encourage the students to reason meaning from context and then substantiate the meaning with the dictionary: tiffin, jalousies, prahu, solar topis, terais, bowlers, Homburg, tram-cars, hawkers, barrows.

TEACHING THE NOVEL

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

The careful class study of a novel can be an exciting and imaginative experience for junior and senior high school students, or it can be a dull, dry, boring experience which stifles for life the students' desire to read longer works of fiction.

Since the novel is perhaps the literary form, aside from biography and autobiography, that most nearly parallels life itself, the study of the novel offers the teacher an exceptional opportunity to teach moral and spiritual values, cultural insight, and personality development. Because of its length, the novel can explore the life of a person or persons in some depth and perhaps give students an opportunity to explore themselves at the same time.

Definition of the Genre

The word *novel* is derived from the Italian word *novella* which means tale. But the novel is more than a tale. The most frequent definition of a novel is that it is a piece of fictional prose narrative of substantial length. There is no specific length that separates the novel from the novelette or "short novel," just as there is really no demarcation between a short story and a novelette.

Historically the novel goes back to Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605-15). However, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Moll Flanders* (1722) and Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747-48) are generally considered to be the first English novels. One of the chief reasons for the emergence of the novel as a literary form in early eighteenth century England will be interesting to the students. Some would call it the social explanation; authorities insist that "the development of the form of the novel cannot be separated from the rise of the middle class; the development must be seen in terms of the contrast in the literary preparations of the nobility and the bourgeoisie."[1] Certainly as the middle class emerged, it found the poetry of the court poets far above its intellectual level and not directed to it as an audience. The drama of the time, through its coarseness, appealed to the lower class. Therefore, no medium of expression existed to reflect this newly emerging way of life.

> The novel, then, came into being to serve the middle class and to give its members the social and moral instruction in the artistic form most palatable to them. Men who in time of patronage might have written poems dedicated to noblemen now turned to the writing of fiction to please a middle-class audience.[2]

It is significant to note that Defoe and Richardson were members of this middle class.

Points to Consider

Almost any study of the novel will deal with plot and structure, characterization, theme, setting, style, biographical materials, and point of view. These areas will form the nucleus for class discussion, oral reports, written assignments, and special activities. The following questions will be useful in the discussion of these areas.

Plot and Structure

1. What are the principal episodes of the novel?
   How do these episodes lead to a climax?
2. What scene or episode is the climactic one of the novel?

Characterization

1. Who are the chief characters? Do they represent specific persons, values, institutions?
2. How do the characters act and react to one another emotionally, socially, physically?
3. What qualities of character do the principal characters possess? Are these noble qualities? Are some ignoble?
4. Are the characters treated sympathetically? Which ones are not, if any?

---

[1] Edwin H. Sauer, *English in the Secondary School*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 163.

[2] *Ibid.*

Theme

1. What is the principal theme of the book?
2. Are there several themes? Are some major and others minor?

Setting

1. What is the setting of the novel?
2. How does the setting affect the story and/or the characters?
3. What is the time of the story? Is this point important to this book?

Style

1. How does the tone of the book help reveal the author's attitude toward his subject? The characters?
2. What kind of sentences does he use? Are there complexities of sentence patterns that need to be examined?
3. Are there examples of irony, wit, satire, or parody?
4. Are there passages of strong sensory appeal?
5. What contributes to the unity of the work?

Biographical Materials

1. What are the pertinent biographical data?
2. How are these related to the novel?

Point of View

1. What is the point of view?
2. Through whose eyes are the story and the events seen?

Significance

1. Is the novel a classic? Why?
2. Is there a universal quality to the story?
   What are these qualities?

General Suggestions

Much of the success of the unit on the novel depends on the enthusiasm of the teacher and class, on a careful choice of the novel to be studied, and on the method or approach to the unit. Perhaps the teacher and the class should consider several books from a list drawn up by the teacher, the final choice being made by the class. As the class deliberates, the teacher may give a brief resumé of the book under consideration, read a portion of the book aloud, and discuss briefly the type of fiction it represents as well as give other pertinent information that might stimulate the students and help them make the best possible selection. In the compilation of the initial list of four or five books, the chief points to be considered are the reading level of the class, the suitability of the subject matter to the age level, the interests of the students, and the availability of the novel.

After the choice has been made, the teacher may want to try one of several approaches; once again the type of book will guide him in his choice. Margaret Ryan's *Teaching the Novel in Paperback*[3] and Don Wolfe's *Creative Ways to Teach English*[4] both contain excellent discussions on the approach to teaching the novel. One may follow the traditional way of assigning several chapters a day or a section of the novel to be read and discussed over a period of about two weeks. An alternate approach is to ask the students to read the entire novel over a two- or three-week period while doing other language activities in the class; then the class devotes the next week or two to the study of the work. The re-reading of the book is sometimes desirable to prepare for discussions and reports.

> With fiction especially the question, "What are we doing this for?" must be repeatedly faced, and the answers must direct the nature of the class activities, the length of assignments, the kinds of testing, the extent to which supplementary activities will be used: writing, word study, further reading on a similar theme.[5]

From this thorough experience of reading a novel, the students should better understand this type of literature and be able to proceed on their own reading program so that they will get a maximum benefit from what they read, and finally

> With this kind of critical analysis in the classroom, students should see that the principle of form in the novel is chiefly a matter of coherence, of the way in which all parts of the novel work together toward a successful whole, so that, in a very real sense, they are not even separable—each part complements every other part.[6]

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE TEACHING OF *JOHNNY TREMAIN* AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

The manner in which the novel is presented by the teacher to junior high school students may determine whether they continue reading the novel with enjoyment or abandon it completely. Therefore, the teacher must help students analyze the chosen work so that reading becomes more meaningful. Students should also be guided toward the realization that reading is a great source of knowledge. The novel, by delving into the mind and spirit of all kinds of individuals, presents the opportunity for students to know themselves and to understand others.

---

[3] Margaret Ryan, *Teaching the Novel in Paperback*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963).

[4] Don M. Wolfe, *Creative Ways to Teach English, Grades* 7-12, (New York: Odyssey Press, 1958).

[5] Sauer, p. 166.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

Esther Forbes' *Johnny Tremain* has been chosen for consideration here. The depth to which Miss Forbes develops the characters Johnny and Rob gives students a chance to understand the motives and emotions of two young boys living in Revolutionary America. This novel also provides excellent background material for the students' understanding of eighteenth century America—its customs, its speech, its motives of rebellion.

Preparation

Since *Johnny Tremain* deals with Revolutionary Boston, the teacher may wish to have his students study Johnny's story as a part of a literary unit on the Revolutionary War. This novel can be correlated with the study of the Revolutionary Period in American history.

Before the actual class study begins, the teacher should arouse the curiosity of the students. This may be done by bulletin board displays showing landmarks of Boston (Beacon Hill, Christ's Church, Old South, Cockerel, Old Meeting, Hollis, King's Chapel, The Boston Commons), outstanding men of the Revolution, and the author of the book. Films dealing with the Revolution may be shown. The teacher should also prepare his students to listen for main points and help them relate what they hear to their own knowledge and experiences.

The following are suggestions for activities which will involve the students in the preparation for reading *Johnny Tremain.*

Comparison of present day Boston and eighteenth century Boston

Oral reports selected at the teacher's discretion from the following:

- The Boston Tea Party
- The Boston Massacre
- "Indentured" apprentices
- John Hancock
- Paul Revere
- Josiah Quincy
- Justice Dana
- Reverend Sam Cooper
- James Otis
- Joseph Warren
- John Adams
- *The Afric Queen*
- The Observers
- The Sons of Liberty

Other Forbes novels
The Blue Laws

Read "Paul Revere's Ride" by Longfellow. (There are some excellent recordings of this poem.)

Reading

To arouse interest the teacher may read selected passages to the students; or if there are good readers in the class, they may be asked to read aloud to the other pupils. Since *Johnny Tremain* is divided into parts according to the major periods in Johnny's life, one division for each discussion period should be appropriate. The teacher should guide students in taking notes during the reading and discussion periods.

Discussion

The frequency of discussion periods should be determined by the reading level of the class. For questions to guide discussion the reader is referred to the general questions in the introduction on teaching the novel. Questions about the happenings of the story will grow naturally out of the reading.

The following questions not directly concerned with the events of the story may be used to help the students understand themselves and Johnny better.

1. If you were a child of a socially prominent family would you be rejected by your family if you married someone whose social background was not equal to yours?
2. Would you sacrifice your life for anyone else?
3. How would you feel if your mother were about to die and you knew you would have to face life alone?
4. Would you try to follow her wishes concerning your life's work?
5. Would you make your own choice or feel as though you should have an opinion about your own life?
6. Is it possible to have no opinions?
7. If you were given a responsibility comparable to that which Johnny was given in the silversmith's shop, could you accept it?
8. Would you have accepted the challenge that Johnny accepted from Mr. Hancock? What was this challenge?
9. When Johnny worked on Sunday to finish the sugar bowl, why was he considered to be breaking the law?
10. If you were deprived of continuing your training because of an accident, what would be your reaction?
11. If you were jailed because one of your relatives told a lie, how would you feel?
12. If you had lived during the Revolution, would you have wanted to be a member of the group known as the Sons of Liberty?

13. How do you think you would feel if your closest friend were killed.

It is impossible to list all the questions which could be asked during this study. Many others evolve from those suggested here. Discussion should not be cut short if interest among the students is high. A few additional days in teaching the junior high school novel may make the difference for most students between reading or not reading in the future.

Suggested Activities

Writing

Summary of a favorite chapter
Theme: "A Big Decision"
Character sketches of Johnny and Rob

Speaking

Informal group discussions of episodes in Johnny's life
Panel discussions about major problems Johnny had to face
Debate on the Boston Tea Party
Debate on the system of apprenticeship

Vocabulary Building

Study of words peculiar to the eighteenth century as revealed in *Johnny Tremain*

Further Reading

Merritt Parmelee Allen, *Battle Lanterns*
Marion Marsh Brown, *The Swamp Fox*
Walter D. Edmonds, *Wilderness Clearing*
Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *Paul Revere and the Minute Men*
Esther Forbes, *America's Paul Revere*
John Fox, Jr., *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*
Janice Holt Giles, *The Kentuckians*
Robert Lawson, *Mr. Revere and I*
Marjorie K. Rawlings, *The Yearling*
Frances Rogers and Alice Beard, *The Birthday of a Nation, July 4, 1776*

Audio-visual Aids

The American Revolution (6 color filmstrips recommended for junior high and produced by EBF Films)
War for Independence (8 color filmstrips recommended for both junior and senior high schools and produced by EBF Films)

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN* AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Because Mark Twain's novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, can be read both for the delightful story told in the first person by Huck and for the commentary on society and mankind made by the author through his main character, this book has been chosen as one which can be presented to senior high school students of varying abilities.

Preparation

If the teacher is to find the study of the novel rewarding, careful preparation must be made to arouse the curiosity and the interest of the students. Several days prior to the date set for the study of *Huckleberry Finn,* the teacher may prepare a bulletin board display with pictures of the author, scenes of Mississippi River towns, and illustrations of events in the novel. He may choose several quotations from Huck's story and write one of these each day, without comment, on the board.

The students should be involved in the preparation also. Reports such as these should be assigned at least a week in advance:

Early nineteenth century Mississippi River towns
The Hannibal of Twain's day and the present day Hannibal
Mark Twain–the man
Mark Twain–the writer (local colorist, humorist, pessimist)
Review of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* or other works by Twain
Slavery during the early nineteenth century

Reading

The teacher may wish to begin by reading the first chapter aloud to the students. The novel may be read completely before assignments are given for class discussion, or it may be divided into three parts: Chapters 1-16; Chapters 17-31; Chapters 32-43. Perhaps major discussion periods should be conducted after each of these divisions. However, shorter assignments may be made according to the episodes of the novel, such as the introductory chapters and Pap's appearance, Huck's forced stay with and escape from his father, the Grangerford incident, and the Wilks swindle. Before the second reading begins, the teacher may ask the students to keep a notebook for writing their reactions to the events in the story and for taking notes which would aid them in class discussion. The teacher should point out to them specific things to look for in their reading. These things may include superstitions, humor and satire, customs, attitudes toward slavery, local color, setting, style, and characterization.

Discussion

The teacher may consider the episodes of the story in sequence with a general discussion following the reading of the entire book, or he may discuss such elements as setting, characterization, and style as developed in each episode. The following are points of general interest which should be covered in class discussion.

Structure—It should be pointed out that this novel does not follow the usual plot structure of the novel, but it is developed as a series of episodes or short adventures.

Setting—The teacher will find the use of a wall map of the Mississippi River Valley helpful in tracing the travels of Jim and Huck. He should point out Hannibal, Missouri, the St. Petersburg of the story, and Cairo, Illinois, the haven of freedom to the Negro slave.

Theme—Since most teenagers feel that they live in a grown-up's world which is not of their making or liking, they will easily recognize Huck's struggle against an adult society.

Characterization—Huck and Jim are Twain's best characters in this novel. Much attention should be paid to the changes that occur as the character of each develops.

Humor and Satire—*Huckleberry Finn* is a book which can be read for the pure pleasure of reading and enjoying the story of a young boy and a Negro slave. There will be times when the reader will find himself laughing aloud over some of the hilarious situations in which Huck and Jim become involved. The students of lower reading ability should be allowed to enjoy the novel primarily for its humor, but the teacher should point out that Twain, the great jokester, was often laughing "at" people rather than "with" them. Twain satirizes many things in the novel —the cowardice of lynching parties, the chicanery of patent medicine fakers, revivalists, and the senseless fighting and feuding of the gentry.

Style—One of the most exciting areas of *Huckleberry Finn* is the study of Mark Twain's style. The use of the first-person narrative is important to the impact which the novel has on the reader. Twain is a master in the use of language. With the teacher's help, the students should be able to see what he achieves through the use of the three dialects.

Suggested Activities

Dramatization of an episode from the story

Theme: Character sketch of Jim and/or Huck

Theme: "Impressions of Life Along the Mississippi During Huck's Day"

Theme: "The Satire in *Huckleberry Finn*"

Theme: "Attitudes Toward Slavery in Huck's Day"

Report: Superstitions found in the novel

A newspaper story: The student pretends to be a reporter living at the time of the events of this novel and writes a news story about one of the more important happenings.

Audio-visual Aids—The following records and filmstrips may be used either for motivation purposes or for cumulative activities.

Filmstrip—*Mark Twain* (McGraw-Hill)
Filmstrip—*Tom Sawyer Whitewashes the Fence* (EBF Films)
Record—*Understanding and Appreciation of the Novel* (Educational Record Sales)
Record—*Mark Twain's Political Satire* (Educational Record Sales)
Record—*Mark Twain Tonight* (Educational Record Sales)
Record—Ferde Grofé, *Mississippi Suite*, second movement, "Huck Finn"

TEACHING DRAMA

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

Drama is the one literary form that is primarily conceived of as life rather than as a written portrayal of life. It has, then, the immediacy and impact of actuality. Drama as a performing medium and not just a literary medium has visual and aural, emotional and intellectual appeal, eliciting a variety of responses from the reader-viewer, and quite possibly appeals to the student more than any other genre, once he has overcome the difficulty of format. The student probably meets the drama in more aspects of his life than any other literary form: legitimate theater, motion pictures, radio drama, television drama, religious festivals, and printed drama.

The three- or five-act drama is long enough to allow a satisfactory development and exploration of character, action, and theme, yet short enough to be read in a brief time. The short story, which also has these qualities, lacks the immediacy and vividness of the drama; the short story is a recounting, the drama is an enacting. Thus, the drama is the ideal form for introducing the student to many major authors and works, to varied techniques and styles, to differing philosophies and views of human nature.

Definition

A drama is a literary work written in dialogue and intended for presentation by actors. Drama has been traditionally divided into the two major types of tragedy and comedy. The student should gain a thorough understanding of the two types. Tragedy may be defined as "that form of drama in which the protagonist undergoes a morally significant struggle; in which the conflict is rather within a character than between characters or between a character and external forces . . .; and in which the protagonist, although treated sympathetically, incurs guilt of which the expiation . . . is part of the dramatic problem."[1] Comedy may be defined as "that form of drama which has its orientation in 'the way of the world' rather than in ultimate moral problems; which is concerned with man's relation to society rather than to immutable truths; which deals with experience at a level where expediency and compromise are suitable rather than questionable; and where the best judgment of society rather than one's conscience provides the criterion of conduct."[2] It would be well to discuss with the students the value of each type of drama: tragedy gives morally significant insights; comedy gives social insights. A discussion of Horace Walpole's statement would be valuable at this point: Life is a comedy to the man who thinks and a tragedy to the man who feels.

Student should become familiar with two other types of drama, farce and melodrama. Farce is that type of comedy in which situation and character are exploited for comic effect rather than for insight. Melodrama is that type of drama in which emotion and action are exaggerated and treated extravagantly; it is akin to tragedy but is superficial rather than profound, ending patly with the punishment of evil and the reward of good.

Points to Consider

Purposes of Drama—The purposes of drama are manifold. One of the earliest purposes was religious: the drama served as an act of worship. A related purpose was didactic: the drama served to instill moral and social virtues esteemed by rulers, by religion, by society. An obvious purpose is to entertain, to tell a story, to induce pleasure. Drama serves as a means of therapy in effecting the Aristotelian "purgation" of emotion. It is a valuable means of social criticism. It serves to reveal the author's view of human nature, his personal philosophy. Significant drama is, in effect, the great questioning, as is all great literature ultimately. As Ibsen said, "A dramatist's business is not to answer questions, but merely to ask them." The reader-viewer is stimulated to seek the answers.

Elements of Drama

Dialogue—The indispensable element of drama is dialogue. Even pantomime, a dramatic form, consists of the dialogue of body movement and facial expression. The student must be made aware of the fact that, unlike the author of a novel, a playwright is, by the nature of his medium, limited in his methods of presentation. He cannot, as the novelist can, talk directly to the "audience," describing scenes, setting mood, explaining actions. He must achieve all these things through dialogue—what the characters say and what they do not say. Except for a very limited use of direct instruction for stage setting and actor movement and a limited use of the soliloquy and the aside, the playwright must reveal motivation and psychological insight by implication, through dialogue and significant silences.

---

[1] Cleanth Brooks and Robert Heilman, *Understanding Drama: Twelve Plays*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1953), p. 52.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

A character in T. S. Eliot's "A Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry" says, "All poetry tends toward drama, and all drama toward poetry." The student should be led to consider the language of drama, whether it be "everyday" prose or poetry. He should be led to understand that the use of verse tends to heighten emotion, to add power and beauty; that even "everyday" prose is not truly everyday language, but carefully chosen language serving to reveal, to heighten, to vivify. Sometimes verse in drama seems incongruous to the student, unnecessary or even ridiculous. For example, many students rebel against the use of blank verse in Maxwell Anderson's *Winterset*, a play in which criminals and a self-educated boy speak in soul-baring poetry. Yet those same students will accept the heightened language of Cyrano de Bergerac or of Hamlet or of Oedipus. It would be well to ask why.

Plot— Plot in drama is, of necessity, condensed, presenting a situation at its critical point. A novel can develop slowly, exploring character, motive, situation. Drama, however, is similar in plot limitation to a short story—the author must present pertinent information quickly, omitting enriching details. Many playwrights have been so aware of the necessary condensation of drama that they have imposed on themselves the restrictions of the "classical unities" of time, space, and action: a drama should concern itself with but one action, occurring in one place, within a twenty-four hour period. Classic Greek drama utilized and French drama of the seventeenth century relished these restrictions. Many modern plays have "do-nothing" plots—the student must be led to see that the seeming inaction can have several purposes: to indicate stagnation and entrapment (as in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*), to emphasize character psychology (as in Albee's *The Zoo Story*), to reveal character or a way of life (as in Synge's *Riders to the Sea* or Gorky's *The Lower Depths*).

Characterization—The essence of drama is characters in conflict, with themselves, with each other, with external forces. The student must be led to see that plot in drama serves to reveal character, to advance conflict, to resolve problems. The author chooses his happenings to suit his purpose, and he is required only to see that those actions are motivated by the characters and events of the play or are consistent with the tone and purpose of the play. Motivation of action in drama is a difficult but necessary principle for the student to grasp; too often a student fails to ask why an author chose to allow a certain happening and refused to allow another, yet this "why-asking" is vital to an understanding of a play.

A consideration of the changing nature of the theatrical "hero" would be worthwhile. The student will be fascinated by the link between the tragic hero of godlike stature and society's philosophical acceptance of man's primary responsibility for his own actions; the middle-class hero of ordinary stature and society's philosophical emphasis on the importance of the "little man" of the middle class; and the anti-hero struggling hopelessly against entrapment and degradation in a materialistic, deterministic, often senseless world and society's philosophical rejection of man's responsibility for his own actions.

Setting and Staging—The student must be aware of the importance of setting in any literary work, but this importance is even greater in drama because the setting of the action is tied in with the staging of the play. Even in drama which is read and not seen as a performed work, an awareness of this setting-staging relationship is vital to an understanding of the play. The playwright conceives of his play as it will be produced in a particular type of theater, so that the setting of the action is related to the theatrical reality. A full understanding of Greek drama is not reached until the student places the actors on the proskenion, in the orchestra, or in the paraskenia, and the chorus in the orchestra before the skene. An understanding of the construction and conventions of the Elizabethan stage—the swift shifting from scene to scene, from inner to outer to upper stage—is necessary to a full comprehension of Elizabethan drama and dramatists. The limitations of the box theater of modern times, the freedoms and challenges of theater in the round are important to an understanding of dramas written for and staged in such theaters.

The student, of course, should be aware of the importance of each play's setting: How many scene changes are there? What is the time spread? What are the time lapses? Is the setting intended to be realistic? Is the setting symbolic? Are the characters intended to be universalized or particularized through the setting?

Theme—Except for those few plays the purpose of which is primarily entertainment, the theme will be of extreme importance. Most playwrights have something to say; the student must be taught to be receptive. A major consideration in seeking the theme of a play will be the author's attitude toward life: he will present life romantically, realistically, or naturalistically. It is important that the student grasp the essential differences of these approaches, of these attitudes. Only then will he be able to interpret what the author is saying about life. Of importance, too, is the author's tone: the student needs to be shown how to find the tone of a play; how to tell whether the author is cynical, bitter, jesting, idealistic, sympathetic, approving. Students have difficulty in separating the author from his characters; it is rare that a student can tell without help that an author lets his major character utter sentiments of which the author disapproves (and shows this by making the audience disapprove). Students have particular difficulty in making sense of plays presenting a paradoxical view of life, such as Pirandello's *Right You Are If You Think You Are,* and such apparently pointless plays as Ionesco's *Rhinoceros* or Beckett's *Waiting for Godot.* They must be shown that a chaotic play is perhaps making the point that life is meaningless, not the play; that contradictions within a play can mean that man can seldom grasp the whole truth, so that those partial truths men grasp seem to contradict one another.

Special Techniques—In studying the drama, the student is likely to be confronted with a variety of techniques which he will find difficult to interpret, difficult to appreciate fully. He will need to gain an understanding of the theatrical use of such revelatory devices as the aside and the soliloquy and the flashback. Symbolism is particularly difficult for the student to detect and to interpret; too often the high school student feels that symbolism is an invention of critics and teachers rather than a consciously-used device of the playwright. The teacher, then, must show the student the logic behind the use of symbols, the legitimate power and vividness of symbols. (Cyrano's plume is more than a plume: Cyrano himself regards it as something to be held high, kept clean, unsullied—his honor.) Expressionistic techniques, too, cause the student difficulty. The student often feels that expressionistic techniques are meaningless distortions of reality, obscuring rather than clarifying or intensifying. Yet, he can be led to see, for example, that Elmer Rice, in *The Adding Machine,* points up the nothingness of his central character by the name "Zero," by the expressionistic party at which Mr. and Mrs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, talk inanely and ritually, that Zero is such a blank that he does not even kill grandly or suffer grandly, but blankly, uncomprehendingly.

General Suggestions

Selection—In selecting a play for a drama unit, the teacher should choose one that has a challenging theme, vivid characterization, an appealing plot, or interesting techniques. The challenging thesis of inherited amorality in Anderson's *The Bad Seed,* the dash and gallantry of the lovelorn Cyrano de Bergerac, the emotional warmth and universality of *Our Town* or *A Raisin in the Sun,* the technical variety of *The Glass Menagerie* or Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* could each be used to arouse interest in drama study. The play need not be a classic, but obviously must be available to the student.

Motivation—After the play is selected, interest may be aroused in many different ways. The playing of records will stimulate interest (Shaw's *St. Joan* begins with attention-getting roars of indignation from the egg-starved Robert de Baudricourt; *The Glass Menagerie* has sympathy-arousing suffering of a son under the nagging tongue of his mother; *Cyrano de Bergerac* begins with a daring challenge by Cyrano to an entire theater of people). The use of pictures on bulletin boards will serve the purpose: Jose Ferrer's Cyrano, Olivier's Othello or Hamlet or Henry V or Richard III, pictures of Joan of Arc or knights for *St. Joan*, pictures from *My Fair Lady* for Shaw's *Pygmalion*. Challenging questions serve to arouse interest: for *St. Joan*, Are saints such disturbing influences that we must kill them to get peace? For *Desire under the Elms*, Can a mother's killing of her baby be a heroic deed? For *The Doll's House*, Under what circumstances is a woman justified in leaving her husband and family?

Approach—There are various ways in which the chosen play may be studied by the class. The students may be asked to read the play outside class in its entirety or act by act, or the teacher may elect to have various students assume roles and read the play in class. The former approach will require advance preparation and continuing guidance from the teacher, possibly in the form of study questions or of brief discussions in class as the reading progresses. The latter approach of reading in class can be cumbersome and time-consuming and even agonizing when inept students take parts; yet this method does give the students an awareness of the play as dialogue, as living drama, and it does afford constant opportunity for interpretation, discussion, and elaboration. The students can gain a vivid awareness of the play as drama if they are allowed to stage and act out selected scenes in the classroom, after guided preparation.

A biographical study of the playwright will often be beneficial to the class, as will a study of the historical period in which the play was written or which the play portrays. Some plays, such as *The Glass Menagerie*, are so strongly autobiographical that the facts of the author's life are basic to a full understanding of the play. A student will react more enthusiastically to Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire* if he knows something of Molière's bouts with the medical profession; and O'Casey's plays are more sympathetically received by a student possessing some knowledge of O'Casey's life and Ireland's troubles. Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* makes more sense to a student who has learned something of the Russian reform agitations of the pre-1905 era. The teacher will need to determine the importance of the biographical and historical material to the play selected for study.

It can be helpful to the student to learn something of the history of drama and how the play being studied fits into the development of drama through the ages. Certainly, the student will profit from learning the relationship of one playwright to others and from learning the contributions which the chosen playwright has made to world drama. It is helpful, for instance, to compare Molière with Shakespeare; and certainly a knowledge of Greek drama is basic to an understanding of Racine's plays, and even of O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra.*

Vocabulary—The teacher will find it desirable to acquaint the student with certain terms basic to an understanding of drama. Such a list might include the following:

proscenium
wings
apron
orchestra
Greek chorus
thespian
protagonist
ingénue
deus ex machina
aside
soliloquy
tragic flaw
catharsis
the three unities
closet drama
comedy of humors
comedy of manners
problem play
theater of the absurd

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *ROMEO AND JULIET* AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Significance

Any play studied by the junior high school student must have artistic merit and must contain meaning for the young student. *Romeo and Juliet,* by William Shakespeare, meets both requirements. The interaction of love and hate in this play, the revelation of the beauty and tragedy of love, the presentation of the conflict of youth and age all appeal to the young student. In addition, the play is by one of the master playwrights of the world and serves as an introduction to a fuller study of his works and, indeed, to any playwright's works. The lyrical beauty and dramatic power of the language, the universality of the theme, the vivid characterization, the swift development of the action through "accident" and character, the brilliantly witty wordplay, even the typical bawdiness of Shakespeare are all present in this drama. As the student comes to understand the dramatic techniques of Shakespeare, coping with the special demands of the Elizabethan stage, he gains an understanding of how drama works, of how playwrights manipulate the dramatic elements in order to express themselves and to reach their audience.

Points to Consider

Plot—*Romeo and Juliet* is a romantic lyric tragedy about two young lovers. Since this is a tragedy, the student will observe that it is a serious play which ends unhappily for the main characters, who are overcome by opposing forces outside themselves and by character traits or emotions within themselves. In *Romeo and Juliet,* the lovers are overcome more by external pressure than by inner emotions. The forebodings of tragedy are evident from the beginning of the play. The feud between the lovers' families represents the fate which Romeo and Juliet are unable to overcome, so that the play is developed through conflict of love action and feud action.

The student should be aware that Shakespeare developed his plot through both characterization and "accidents" or chance happenings. The plot moves very quickly; the entire action takes place within four days.

The rising action begins when Romeo meets Juliet and is threatened by Tybalt; it continues with the marriage of the two lovers. Love action and feud action cross when Romeo slays Tybalt and is sentenced to banishment by Prince Escalus. Events leading to Juliet's taking of the potion make up the falling action; and the resolution comes with the deaths of the two lovers, Friar Lawrence's explanation, the Prince's drawing of the moral lesson, and the making up of the Montague-Capulet quarrel.

Characterization—The students should be aware that one of Shakespeare's great strengths lies in the creation of realistic characters and that his action develops through character and character change.

The developing characters of the play are Romeo and Juliet. Romeo first appears as a melancholy, lovesick boy; but as the play advances and tragedy and suffering, often brought on by themselves, continue to plague the two lovers, he finally reaches maturity. From an obedient, docile child, Juliet develops into a strong, free-willed, and self-reliant woman, seemingly achieving maturity with the inception of her love experience.

All of the characters are realistic, their actions fitting their natures. The quick-witted, life-loving, bawdy, imaginative Mercutio and the plain, simple, coarse, outspoken Nurse are the finest minor figures.

Shakespeare achieves his humor through characterization and the resultant action. One finds the slapstick of the servants Gregory and Sampson, the wit and wordplay of Mercutio and Romeo, the court bawdiness of Mercutio and the earthy bawdiness of the Nurse, all examples of Shakespeare's humor, appealing to a catholic audience.

Setting—Although the setting is Verona, Italy, c. fourteenth century, it is important for the student to see that Shakespeare after all wrote about the Renaissance Englishmen that he knew, even though he placed them in exotic places, and to see beyond this the universal in the particular. (A discussion of Medieval-Renaissance demands on women—thirteen-year-old women—is helpful in lessening the student's disbelief of Juliet's maturity.)

Theme—The theme deals with the interaction of love and hate and reveals the beauty and tragedy of love and the conflict of youth and age.

Special Considerations—An understanding of Shakespeare's stage and stage conventions is necessary for the student to be able to visualize the settings, the characters, and the entrances and exits and to understand Shakespeare's techniques.

Attention should be called to Shakespeare, the poet, the user of words. The student should be led to see the clear, exact, picturesque imagery, the lyric quality of this play, the achievement of humor through words. The student should be made aware of the way in which Shakespeare manipulated the blank verse in order to suit the thought, to make the verse more musical, and to fit the verse to stage production.

A Suggested Approach

Since Shakespeare sometimes seems remote to the modern youngster and his language difficult, the teacher may introduce Shakespeare to the young student by comparative study of *Romeo and Juliet* and Arthur Laurent's *West Side Story*, its modern parallel with the same tragic theme.

Motivation—If *West Side Story* pictures from the October 18, 1961, issue of *Life* magazine can be found, these cutouts can be labeled with quotations from *Romeo and Juliet* to form a very attractive bulletin board. (For example, the scene on the tenement fire escape would have a quotation taken from the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet*.) Practically every one of the *West Side Story* pictures can be used with suitable quotations from *Romeo and Juliet*. If the *Life* pictures are not available, one can use scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* with quotations from *West Side Story* or use appropriate pictures for both plays.

Points to Consider

Theme—The theme of both plays is concerned with young lovers who cannot marry because of bitterness and prejudice on the part of the people around them. Shakespeare's play presents a conflict between two families. *West Side Story* uses a major problem in our society today—a bitter conflict between people of different races and nationalities.

Characters—The characters of the two plays can be paralleled. The Montagues are Jets, and the Capulets are Sharks. Romeo is Tony; Juliet is Maria. County Paris, the man Juliet is expected to marry, is Chino in *West Side Story*.

Situations and Plot Development—Situations and plot development in the two plays can be paralleled. Shakespeare's romantic settings of gardens are dark alleys and tenements in New York's westside Manhattan. Balconies in *Romeo and Juliet* are fire escapes in *West Side Story;*

street fights between Montagues and Capulets are fights between Jets and Sharks; the dance at Lord Capulet's home is the dance at the gym. Tybalt kills Mercutio, and Romeo kills Tybalt to avenge the death of his friend; Bernardo kills Riff, and Tony kills Bernardo to avenge his friend's death. Romeo hears that Juliet is dead, and his suicide is a result of this news; when Tony is told that Chino has killed Maria, he challenges Chino and is killed by him. After the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, Capulet and Montague make their peace; after the deaths of Tony and Bernardo, Jets and Sharks forget their bitterness and carry Tony's body to the waiting ambulance.

General Suggestions

Vocabulary—Shakespeare's use of words that fit his time can be compared with the terminology found in *West Side Story.* The Prince of Verona's title becomes the "fuzz" or "cop." "Mutiny" becomes "rumble"; the "sword" used to kill becomes "switchblade"; "have at thee" becomes "come get me! I'm waiting!"; "rebellious subjects, enemies to peace" becomes "hoodlums" or "rumblers."

Audio-visual Aids

Recordings—Caedmon's recording of *Romeo and Julie*t facilitates understanding if each act or scene is played after it has been discussed in class.

Available musical recordings can be used to tie in music with literature. (Symphonic pieces by Berlioz and Tschaikovsky and an opera by Gounod are based on *Romeo and Juliet,* and many recordings of Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* music have been made.)

Students can try to detect the various literary themes in the music.

The classical music can be contrasted with that of *West Side Story* in mood, techniques, and suitability.

The emotional impact of the plays can be intensified by the use of the music. (The balcony scene as viewed from the fire escape in *West Side Story* is unforgettable with the two songs "Maria" and "Tonight.")

Filmstrips and Films

Romeo and Juliet, Teaching Film Custodians, Inc. 4 reels. A classroom version of MGM's picture of 1936 with Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard.

William Shakespeare—Background for His Works, Coronet Instructional Films, 1½ reels (b/w or color). This shows places of Shakespeare's times and elements of English life that gave him his language and shaped his character. Brief episodes are presented from some of the most frequently studied plays, including Act II, scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet.*

Shakespeare's Theater. Encyclopedia Britannica. 4 reels, color. Prologue to the Globe Theater; The Playhouse Comes to London; Design and Construction; A Day at the Globe Theater.

Pictures of the Globe Theater and costumes for that period can be shown with the opaque projector.

Drawings of the Globe Theater, illustrations of stage directions, and comparisons of the Elizabethan theater with the modern theater may be used with the overhead projector or many can be drawn on the blackboard.

Suggested Activities

Activities can be planned to include all ability levels within a classroom.

Writing Activities—All students can write character sketches; more advanced ones might contrast similar characters from the two plays.

Using a modern setting, students may select a character from *Romeo and Juliet* and write a story around him.

Students might enumerate the "accidents" appearing in the plot of *Romeo and Juliet* and the effect these had on the outcome. (Romeo meets the illiterate servant and thereby attends the Capulet party where he meets Juliet.)

In order to emphasize concise writing, news stories for a paper may be written—the street fight, the deaths of Tybalt and Mercutio, Prince Escalus' sentencing of Romeo, the parents' finding the lovers dead, or a society editor's story of the ball.

Other Activities—Pupils who enjoy doing art work might make replicas of the Globe Theater, do a scale drawing of a modern stage, dress dolls in the costumes representative of the Elizabethan era and of the modern *West Side Story* version. (The research needed to accomplish these works has aroused the interest of the slow student.)

A study of some of the problems that exist in the slum areas of some of our large cities could offer an excellent point of discussion for the entire class.

A discussion of well-known feuds might lead to a better understanding of the basic causes and the futility of feuding.

A study of Shakespeare—the social and political background of his time, and how his works relate to our modern world—can be done by some students.

Some may wish to read additional plays by Shakespeare or other authors and report to the class.

Scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* may be read by students, using simple staging within the classroom.

To introduce the lighter side, Richard Armour's humorous presentation of Shakespeare and *Romeo and Juliet* from *Twisted Tales of*

Shakespeare can be read to the class after the study of the play has been completed.

Supplementary Reading—Regardless of the grade level or the ability range within the grades themselves, the teacher may find numerous one-act and three-act plays to fit the group. A few suggestions are offered.

Sir James Barrie, *Peter Pan*
Mary Chase, *Harvey*
E. P. Conkle, *Sparkin'*
Horton Foote, *The Dancers*
Holsworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass, *The Valiant*
W. W. Jacobs and Louis N. Parker, *The Monkey's Paw*
Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse, *Life with Father* and *Life with Mother*
Norman McKinnel, *The Bishop's Candlesticks*
Russell Medcraft, *The First Dress Suit*
Edward E. Rose, *Penrod*
Edmond Rostand (Brian Hooker, translator), *Cyrano de Bergerac*
William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*
Robert Sherwood, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*
Betty Smith, *The Boy Abe* and *Young Lincoln*
Dan Totheroh, *The Stolen Prince*
John Van Druten, *I Remember Mama*

Evaluation—Student evaluation may take many forms. An "open book" test may be used to cover the following points: presenting the time scheme of the play; the "accidents" included and their effects on the plot; the forebodings of tragedy; or lines which help to establish character traits of selected characters.

Objective tests given as the work progresses or at the end of the unit will give the teacher a good indication of the degree of general understanding of the play.

Some well-directed essay questions concerning the characters, the plot, and the type of play will allow the students to show how much they have learned.

An oral and/or written evaluation of the study itself—materials covered, methods of study, supplementary books, and other aids used, suggestions for improving the unit—should be undertaken before going to another unit of study.

Supplementary Materials

Books (starred items are paperbacks)

J. C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse*
*Marchette Chute, *Stories from Shakespeare*
*Norris Houghton, *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story*
*Irving Shulman, *West Side Story*, a novelization
*Margaret Webster, *Shakespeare Without Tears*

Magazines

Gary J. Taylor, "Romeo and Juliet and West Side Story: An Experimental Unit," *The English Journal*, October, 1962.

Gladys Verdemanis, "Shakespeare in the High School Classroom," *The English Journal*, April, 1964.

Pamphlets

West Side Story—Special Student Study Guide. October, 1961. National Council of Teachers of English. $ .30. Special discount of 20% on orders of 20 or more.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *THE GLASS MENAGERIE* AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Significance

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams offers a worthwhile study to senior high school students. After Eugene O'Neill, Williams and Arthur Miller are probably the pre-eminent modern American playwrights, each offering his own techniques, subject matter, and philosophy. Williams is a member of the literary "Southern Renaissance," aware of the South as a region, as a way of life, holding to the past or facing the modern world or destroyed by the incompatibility of the past and the present. Williams most often studies the problem of the decaying or decayed South in a modern world. His people are "fugitive" people, torn and often destroyed by the necessity of coping with brutal modernity. *The Glass Menagerie*, 1944, is the play which made Williams famous and is well worth studying both as an introduction to Williams and as a play in its own right. It reveals characters and themes he later developed and even exploited; it has his power and beauty and is suitable for high school because it is lacking in the open sensuality of later Williams' plays; it provides an opportunity to study the varied techniques of his dramatic literary form; and it offers a rewarding study of human nature and human relationships.

Points to Consider

The play is autobiographical in nature. The student should be aware that an author seeks to portray reality by drawing on his own experience. Some facts of Williams' life parallel some facts of the play (Tom and Williams worked in a warehouse; Tom and Williams had grandfathers who were Southern ministers; Tom and Williams each had a crippled sister; the Wingfields and Williams lived in "Death Alley"; and so on).

An author sees the universal in the particular: he knows all men by one man, all life by one life. It would be well to discuss whether this statement is valid for this play, or whether this play is primarily a personal remembering.

The play as drama is a mixture of styles and devices. Basically it is a realistic probing into human nature: one should be aware that Williams makes the reader accept his characters as true through the setting (poverty, ugliness, fire escape); dialogue (dialect, curses, nagging); actions (drunkenness, arguing, non-payment of bills); and characterization (ambivalent feeling of characters for each other, Jim's gum).

It is a "memory" play: it presents people in the world of reality, but it removes a step from reality by the use of Tom Wingfield as Narrator, who is outside events of the play, looking back on himself and his past.

One should discuss the value of having two Toms: by the use of the Narrator, the struggle and the escape—and the failure to escape—are heightened and the terrible price of escape is made apparent; Williams uses Tom as Narrator because he escaped from the situation and can look back on it with a mixture of detachment and emotional involvement, both necessary in this play.

Williams shifts back and forth from Tom the Narrator to Tom the participant. The narrator is outside the play, looking back; the participant is inside the play, suffering and struggling. One should discuss whether these are actually two separate Toms or whether the difference is one of time only.

A "memory" play allows the use of expressionistic and symbolistic techniques.

Williams gives detailed stage directions. Through these he establishes mood, ensures his desired interpretation of a scene or character, and stresses the theme. However, one should point out that many producers have ignored the directions as unnecessary and "stagy," feeling them to be unwarranted usurpation by the author of the producer's domain. One should discuss the validity of this attitude of the producers.

One should study the expressionistic elements employed by Williams and ascertain the effectiveness of these.

The action is presented in scenes or vignettes because memory is selective, not continuous.

Music is used in a *leitmotif* or thematic manner to achieve irony, poignancy, satire, symbolism, reinforcement; to inject author comment; and to achieve "highlighting" or stressing of desired points. This technique loses reality and at times proves irritating.

Williams manipulates stage lighting more than do most authors to achieve counterpoint, paradox, irony, and emphasis.

Williams uses legends and images on a screen on stage, a device perhaps suitable to a memory play and not to others, since a memory play is already, to some extent, artificial, and can be presented through artificialities without jolting the viewer. Williams, losing reality, enhances the "memory" quality of the play by their use and is able to make his emphases directly instead of relying on a perceptive producer; but they present a difficulty to the producer and are, perhaps, "artiness" rather than practical theater.

An awareness and understanding of the symbolism used throughout the play are essential to an understanding of the play itself.

The symbols reveal the characters with whom they are associated (Laura has the fragility of the glass animals; Amanda is as painfully youthful as the now-inappropriate cotillion dress). They reveal the author's attitude toward the characters (Laura is sweet and delicate and pitiful; Amanda is artificial and essentially false, yet to be pitied). They elucidate and reinforce the theme (glass animals and glass people break; cotillion dresses and jonquils are unsuited to the cruel world of reality).

Characterization plays a major role in *The Glass Menagerie*. Williams in showing the "fugitive" people and their agonized efforts to cope with life makes the interrelationships of *The Glass Menagerie* extremely important.

The role of the father is a key to the psychological relationships of the play. It is important to know why he left, to know where the guilt fell, to know whose the fault was. His leaving affected all three of the others: it made Amanda insecure, turning her back to the Blue Mountain past for reassurance; it put the burden of family support on Tom and made him sacrifice his dreams; and it made Laura's psychological and social insecurity a burden to her mother and her brother.

The mother acts as the catalytic agent of the play, representing to the children a desperate attempt to force them to cope with reality. She forces Tom into the role of father-substitute but doubts his ability; he hates both the forcing and the doubting. She tries to force Laura to normality, yet she fears her daughter as a rival to herself. The mother-daughter relationship is crucial and complex: there is at times a reversal of roles, an ambivalence of feeling. Laura understands her mother's insecurity and her mother's attempts to force her to cope with life; Laura is often more willing to accept the reality of her situation than Amanda is. The mother is unconsciously cruel in her rivalry with her daughter, crippling and isolating her.

It is important that Williams does not present Amanda as an ogre; she is as trapped as Tom and Laura and is trying to cope with life. In many ways she is admirable: in her love, her drive for life, her brave facing of a terrible reality. Yet it is equally important to probe into the truth about Amanda's past: was she what she says she was, or is Blue Mountain her "glass menagerie"?

Laura's is the crisis role of the play—she could be saved. Her physical crippling, paralleled with her emotional crippling, motivates Amanda's love and Amanda's cruelty, and Tom's pity, and Laura's failure.

Tom's role is that of escape from the glass menagerie—he becomes Narrator. It is important to understand why Tom left; he has been told so often that he will leave, he is the only one who can leave, and since Laura is defeated there is nothing to stay for. It is important to understand why Tom remembers Laura and not Amanda: Tom knows Amanda can cope, some way, but Laura is lost, and he feels guilt.

The *action* in *The Glass Menagerie* centers on the possible salvation of Laura and, secondarily, the salvation of Tom and Amanda. The rising action is Amanda's plans for Laura's future security; the climax is the arrival of the gentleman caller; the falling action is the failure of Amanda's plan to secure Laura's future, to cope with life.

The crisis of the gentleman caller is the psychological and thematic crux of the play. There is a crucial discrepancy between Jim as Williams presents him and Jim as Laura sees him. Laura sees him through her dreams, and his. One has the contrast of what she thinks Jim to be (a marvel) and what he is (an unperceptive egotist), and the contrast of what Jim thinks he is and what the viewer knows him to be. Williams presents Jim as an ordinary young man: in a dream world a knight in shining armor rescues the maiden; in reality Laura is offered an ordinary young man. Williams chooses Jim instead of a stranger for the gentleman caller: Laura is willing to be won by Jim because of her memories of him; the revelation of his engagement is, therefore, more brutal to her. It is important to decide whether Jim represents Laura's chance for normality or not, whether Laura is saved or lost to reality after Jim's visit.

The *theme* of the play is concerned with the characters' adjustment to reality. Several questions should be asked: What is the characters' contact with real life—do they cope? are they failures? are they cripples? What is Williams saying about the Lauras, the Toms, the Amandas of the world? about the Jims? Is Williams' psychological insight true?

What *type of drama* is this play? One might discuss the fact that *The Glass Menagerie* has elements of tragedy. Is it a tragedy in the classical sense? One might ask also, since *The Glass Menagerie* presents the "problem" of fugitive people in the world of reality, if one is justified in terming it a "problem" play.

General Suggestions

Audio-visual Aids—There is an excellent full recording by Caedmon TRS-M-301 (2). The record can be played in class as a first "reading" of the play. This has the advantage of vividness and immediacy but the drawback of seeming a definitive reading to students, and it does not present an opportunity for close study at first reading. An in-class-with-record reading takes two days; if this suggestion is followed, students should learn the facts of Williams' life before the reading, since the play has autobiographical elements.

Williams' biographical data and the play can be assigned for outside-class reading within a week's time if enough copies are available. The record can then be used as an enrichment experience. This allows students to compare their interpretations with the actors' interpretations.

Suggested Activities—Small groups of students, through drawings or models, may picture the staging of a scene—images, legends, colors, and setting. This helps them see the play as alive, and it emphasizes the techniques of creating tone and atmosphere.

Students may explore and explain symbols in papers or in panel discussions: fire escape, dance studio, Blue Roses, Blue Mountain, Death Alley, candles, victrola, glass menagerie, unicorn, cotillion dress, jonquils.

Students may find examples of music used in the leitmotif manner and discuss the purposes of such use. This may be in the form of a written composition or of an oral discussion, or both.

Evaluation—There is constant evaluation of group discussion and individual work on projects. The final test paper can cover general understandings of the play and its problems, if they are not covered in previous discussion.

1. Is this play a classical tragedy? Is it a tragedy in any sense?
2. Who is the major character of the play?
3. Is it correct to say that Jim represents Laura's chance for normality? Is Laura saved or lost after Jim's visit?
4. What is the truth about Amanda's past?
5. Does Tom really go to the movies?
6. How close to reality is Williams' picture of human nature?

Motivation and Adaptation to Levels—The suggested approach is slanted toward upper-level students. Certain adaptations will be necessary for low-average students.

Helps in interpretation of the printed word may be necessary. If the Caedmon record is available, it will be a valuable tool for use with low-average students. It gives vividness, voice, tone, emotion, accent, heightened conflict, and movement to the play—all of which the low-average students often fail to find in their private reading of a play.

If the record is not available, the teacher must help the students as they read to sense these things. Acting out scenes can help students to obtain a sense of tone, emotion, conflict, and movement, but students will need a certain amount of teacher guidance in working out the potential of a scene.

If motivation is necessary, the mother-son and mother-daughter relationships are natural openers: all students, of whatever level, tend to identify themselves with the mother-offspring relationship of the play and to react emotionally. This emotion is a good springboard to a more probing analysis of the play—human nature first, dramatic techniques second.

With low-average students, less emphasis on written, individual papers and more emphasis on class discussion, "buzz sessions," and panel discussions will be effective. However, low-average students are deeply interested in probing into psychological problems involved in plays. These students should prove capable of writing good papers concerning these problems and should be able to make an effective presentation of their views to the class.

Low-average students will need far more teacher-guidance in working with the playwright's techniques: symbolism, themes, staging, ironies. One could approach the problem through the staging of a particular scene (*not* acting, emphasis upon the staging), then discussing why Williams wanted this staging and what was achieved and what was lost. From this, one could go into the symbolism.

Supplementary Reading (starred material is less difficult)

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* (Greek tragedy)
*Maxwell Anderson, *Winterset* (American protest verse-drama)
*Robert Bolt, *A Man for All Seasons* (English verse-drama)
Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard* (Russian realistic symbolism)
Euripides, *The Trojan Women* (Greek tragedy)
————————, *Medea* (Greek tragedy)
*Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (American Negro drama)
Henrik Ibsen, *The Doll's House* (Norwegian realism)
Ben Jonson, *Volpone* (English Renaissance comedy of humours)
*Joseph Kesselring, *Arsenic and Old Lace* (American comedy)
*Ira Levin and Mac Hyman, *No Time for Sergeants* (American comedy)
Archibald MacLeish, *J. B.* (American drama)
Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus* (English Renaissance drama)
Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (American middle-class tragedy)
Molière, *Tartuffe* (French satiric comedy)
————————, *The Imaginary Invalid* (French satiric comedy)
Sean O'Casey, *Juno and the Paycock* (Irish realistic tragi-comedy)
Eugene O'Neill, *Desire under the Elms* (American naturalism)
Elmer Rice, *The Adding Machine* (American expressionism)
*Dore Schary, *Sunrise at Campobello* (American drama)
*George Bernard Shaw, *Arms and the Man* (Anglo-Irish wit)
*————————, *Caesar and Cleopatra* (Anglo-Irish wit)
*————————, *Pygmalion* (Anglo-Irish wit)
William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (English Renaissance tragedy)
————————, *Macbeth* (English Renaissance tragedy)
————————, *Othello* (English Renaisance tragedy)
————————, *Comedy of Errors* (English Renaissance comedy)

______________, *Taming of the Shrew* (English Renaissance comedy)
Richard B. Sheridan, *The Rivals* (English comedy of manners)
*Robert Sherwood, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* (American drama)
Sophocles, *Antigone* (Greek tragedy)
______________, *Oedipus Rex* (Greek tragedy)
John Millington Synge, *Playboy of the Western World* (Irish comedy)
*John Van Druten, *Bell, Book, and Candle* (English comedy)
*Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Anglo-Irish farce)
Thornton Wilder, *The Skin of Our Teeth* (American expressionism)
*______________, *Our Town* (American drama, commentator technique)

TEACHING POETRY

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

If the poet is, as Baudelaire defined him, "a man uniquely able to be at once himself and everyman," then his words have immeasurable value for students who are trying to find themselves and to establish their relationships with their fellows. The understanding of poetry becomes an added resource for understanding life's complexities and its infinite possibilities. The study of poetry can increase the student's sensitivity to the beauty and the nuances of his own language and can enhance his emotional life through the vicarious sharing of the heightened experiences of others.

Definition

Babette Deutsch in her *Poetry Handbook* defines poetry as "the art which uses words as both speech and song to reveal the realities that the senses record, the feelings salute, the mind perceives, and the shaping imagination orders."[1] In contrast to the eloquence of Deutsch's statement is David Aloian's simple definition: "Poetry is one person talking to another about some human experience. It is a dialogue between the poet and his reader." The qualities of this dialogue he identifies as musical, compact, dramatic, and important.[2]

Points to Consider

The study of any poem should include certain phases. The student must understand the content. He must comprehend the purpose of the author. He must become aware of the function or contribution of such poetic elements as imagery, figures of speech, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, rhyme, and mood, but not in isolation from the meaning.

---

[1] Babette Deutsch, *Poetry Handbook: A Dictionary of Terms* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1962), p. 111.

[2] David Aloian, *Poems and Poets* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 16.

The student will have little difficulty in understanding the content of a simple narrative. He will, however, need guidance in subtle or complicated works. Identification of the speaker, understanding of allusions, awareness of irony, interpretation of metaphorical language—these are the difficulties for the student seeking to grasp the content of a poem.

The tone of the poem and the author's attitude are likely to be difficult for students when considering purpose of the author. The student will have little difficulty in identifying the poetic elements in a work. The difficulty will lie in understanding how the author uses these elements to contribute to the mood, movement, effect, and meaning of the poem.

Methods of Presentation

Traditional methods of teaching poetry with emphasis upon form, rhyme scheme, meter, musical devices, and figurative language are most useful when students have already been won to a love of poetry. Such an approach, however, often tends to create or increase hostility among those who are still resistant to the poetic experience. The technicalities peculiar to the genre are indeed a vital part of the student's understanding of poetry, but they should be introduced after the student has found meaning in poetry, when he will be ready to ask, with Ciardi, "How does a poem mean?"

The non-technical approach is designed to evoke the same responses to poetry that the average student makes to music. As the student sits by the hour listening to contemporary music, he is not analyzing the technical aspects of the pieces. He has little concern for the individual notes, the number of bars, the musical phrasing, or precise knowledge of time. He is, instead, enjoying the mood, the emotional tone, the relationship to experience suggested by the music. The non-technical approach attempts to answer the questions the student knows instinctively about music: What is poetry? What are the basic differences between poetry and prose? For what is poetry useful? What can poetry do for the reader?

Having determined for himself the why and the what of poetry, the student will be more receptive to an examination of the technical aspects of the genre. At this point, the student may be led to ask the following questions: What are the resources of poetry? How does poetry communicate? It is in this part of his study that the student should be asked to analyze the techniques of the poet.

He will cover such points as 1) the sensory, intellectual, emotional, and linguistic resources of poetry; 2) the suitability of form (sonnet, ode, limerick) and class (narrative, dramatic, and lyric) to content; 3) the suitability of the metrical devices (foot, meter, rhyme scheme) and musical devices (alliteration, repetition, assonance, internal rhyme, musical words) to mood; and 4) the suitability of figurative language, irony, symbolism, and imagery to the aims of poetry.

Selection of Poetry

The teacher's responsibility is to discover and provide the kind of poetry with which the student can identify and in which he can find both meaningfulness and pleasure. The age and experience of the student will to an extent determine his poetic needs. As a rule, the junior high school student is too unsophisticated, too unknowledgeable for subtle, complicated works. The narrative poem—appealing through its story, its characters, its drama—will serve best to introduce him to the world of poetry. The high school student, having achieved a greater degree of sophistication which will enable him to cope with difficult materials and with approaches other than the narrative, may be introduced to all poetic forms. However, he is likely to resist material with which he cannot readily identify. How then is the teacher to determine his selection?

Arthur O'Shaughnessy's "Ode" ends with the lines: "For each age is a dream that is dying/ Or one that is coming to birth."[3] Finding the dream qualities of the age in which the student lives should provide the key to the selection of the poetry he should be taught. The National Council of Teachers of English Committee on English Curriculum, basing its study on adolescent psychology, discovered that the intellectual needs of adolescents are secondary to their emotional needs; that adolescents are questioning and uncertain regarding values, insight into self, and ultimate meanings. The emotional response which students seek is contingent upon identification with the work. It is difficult for the student to identify with the poet whose mode of expression is archaic, stilted, and formal. He will go more willingly into the study of literature of the past if he has already found, in the literature of the present, meaning and recognition and an echoing of his own deepest concerns. Selection of poetry for its relevance to the students' needs will simplify motivation.

General Suggestions

No unit of poetry should omit an emphasis on oral presentation. In most classes, there will be some students who enjoy reading poetry aloud and who do so quite well. Assignments in advance will insure a more effective reading. No student should be required to read poetry orally if he feels uncomfortable about it. Neither should the teacher who is not a talented reader attempt oral presentation. Too many excellent recordings are available for a teacher to compromise the quality of reading.

---

[3] Arthur O'Shaughnessy, "Ode," *Ideas in Poetry*, Oscar H. Fidell, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 174.

Advanced students may find explication a meaningful learning experience. Paraphrasing may have some value if used discriminately and sparingly. Memory work is valuable to the degree that the student is allowed freedom of choice in the lines he wishes to commit to memory.

Perhaps the most productive composition work is the tracing of a single theme through the work of several poets. Such activity forces the student to read widely, and he often finds in his reading a poet whose work is very meaningful to him. Composition work based on symbolism has appeal for the literary student.

If the teacher encourages the writing of original poetry, as he will wish to do with gifted students and with those who are especially enthusiastic over their poetry study, he will want to make certain that the form with which the student is to work is not beyond his degree of sophistication. Young people have fun with limericks and ballads and can work quite naturally within either form. Rare is the student who is ready for the discipline of a sonnet, and perhaps rarer still the student who can achieve poetry in free verse.

Artistic illustration provides some students with a means of interpreting a favorite poem. Working with mood, color, rhythm of line and intensity, a student can learn much about a poem by attempting to replicate it in a watercolor, oil, or other art form. With some poems rich in sensory language, the students will benefit from underlining or writing color words or image words in color.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "PAUL REVERE'S RIDE" AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Significance

Narrative poetry has great appeal to the junior high student, for it contains the elements of dramatic events, swiftly-moving action, dashing heroes, romantic heroines, and humorous incidents. The textbooks provide a wide range of selections from ballads to the epic.

Definition and Historical Background

Narrative poetry is that which tells a story. It had its origin in the heroic epic of the pagan warrior. To celebrate deeds of the hero and perpetuate his name was the business of the bard, or "shaper" of story and song, as the Anglo-Saxons called him. Since then, people of each generation have continued to enjoy story poems, both long and short.

Points to Consider

Motivation and Introduction—The teacher may introduce the poem by asking how poetry differs from prose. The discussion should establish that ideas expressed in rhythmical language that stimulates the imagination and stirs the emotions constitute the essentials of poetry.

The teacher may read the following factual account to prepare for later comparison of poetry and prose after reading "Paul Revere's Ride."

> In 1775 General Gage, the British commander in Boston, learned that the Americans had stored ammunition and weapons in Concord. He was also told that Samuel Adams and John Hancock, two patriots wanted by King George III, were in Lexington, a town a short distance from Concord. On the night of April 18, the General sent out his troops to capture both the supplies and the two American leaders. However, spies discovered these plans. With the help of Robert Newman, who gave the signal, Paul Revere and Billy Dawes set out to warn the colonists living between Boston and Concord that the Regulars were coming.
>
> Early in the morning of April 19, 1775, the British were surprised to find a little band of farmers drawn up on the village green in Lexington. When they would not leave, the British officer in charge gave the order to fire, thus beginning the Revolutionary War. A few hours later at Concord the Americans boldly withstood the British. By fighting Indian fashion, they gradually drove back the Redcoats, eventually to Boston.

It is helpful to have on the chalkboard a map showing Boston, Old North Church, Charlestown, Medford, Mystic River, Lexington, Concord, Revere's and Dawes' routes. The latter left the city through Boston Neck, crossed the Charles River, passed through Cambridge, and met Revere at Arlington.

Setting, character, and plot—The story is told largely by the poet, who has a journalistic style of writing. Longfellow quickly answers the WHO, WHERE, WHAT, HOW, and WHY of his narrative. The teacher should ask the class to skim lines 1-14, which show this; discussion should bring out that *He* in line 6 is Revere.

Unfamiliar words—The teacher may explain the meaning of belfry, peril, phantom, sentinel, defiance, spectral.

Reading—After the above preparation the teacher may read the poem to the class or play a recording, reminding the students to watch for differences between this poem and the prose account read to them.

Study of the Poem—To check the pupils' grasp of the account, the teacher may ask such questions as:

What signal was Paul Revere's friend to give?

Describe the friend's ascent to the tower.

How did Revere get to Charlestown?

Describe Revere's actions as he waited. How long did it take Revere to ride from Medford to Concord?

According to the poet, what was the result of the ride?

What is there in the poem that is missing in the prose accout of the historic two days?

Purpose of the author—Longfellow wished to recreate Revere's ride on April 18, 1775, based on the facts he knew. The teacher can bring out that although the prose account gives us some facts that are missing in the poem, it is obvious that the poem communicates the events more vividly, dramatically, personally, and rhythmically.

Poetic elements—Longfellow uses picture-making words to tell his story. From the following list to be written on the chalkboard, the pupils may select the word or phrase from each set that calls forth the clearest, most definite, mental picture of the action or thing. These will be the words used by the poet.

rides, clatters
follows, chases
cry of alarm, warning
rode into town, galloped into town
twitter of birds, noise of birds
gets on his horse, springs to the saddle
a heavy stride, a heavy step
horse, steed
pausing, stopping
a hurry of hoofs, the sound of a horse
measured tread of the grenadiers, march of the soldiers

Longfellow has intensified the experience by an appeal to our senses. Sounds of the night appeal to our sense of hearing in lines 15, 27-28, 45-46, 73, 85-86, 89-90, 103-104, 123. An appeal to feeling appears in lines 91-92 and 105.

The poet stirs our emotions. The class may find lines that help the reader feel the urgency of Revere's mission in lines 57-63, 78-80, 85-86, 93-94, 119-130. Phrases that build up an atmosphere of mystery and danger are found in lines 20, 34-36, 53-56, 65-67, 95-98.

The poet, like the musician, uses rhythm to bring out thoughts and feelings. The pupils should compare the rhythm in stanza 5 with that of stanza 7 and find the verses where the horse seems to gallop faster than in others. They may also identify devices, besides rhythm, that Longfellow uses to show the speed of the galloping horse. (Some stanzas are shorter, the poet announces the time, Revere gives only fleeting sensory impressions as he gallops through the towns.)

This poem contains numerous examples of alliteration: lines 7, 12, 22, 25, 27, 36.

Enrichment for the more capable class—In discussing the passages where Longfellow paints such vivid pictures, the teacher can teach the simile and the metaphor, which are found in lines 22-23, 44-45, and 55-56.

In lines 107-110 Longfellow uses foreshadowing, a common method of securing suspense by hinting at what is to follow. The students may find another example.

A poet often uses a symbol, a concrete action or object or character, to signify an abstract idea. In this poem Longfellow pictures Revere as more than a patriotic messenger. The teacher may ask what Revere symbolizes.

Additional Activities

Oral Activities—The teacher may assign reports on Patriot's Day in Massachusetts; Henry Longfellow; what happened to Revere, Dawes, Samuel Prescott on the morning of April 19; later accomplishments of Paul Revere.

The group may participate in choral reading or pupil oral reading of the poem.

Written Assignments—Each class member may imagine himself as Revere and write a letter to Mrs. Revere, telling her in detail an incident in his experience on that famous night.

Students may write of the events of April 18-19 from the viewpoint of a British regular.

Some students may wish to make an illustration of a scene in the poem.

Outside Reading

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *Paul Revere and the Minute Men*
Esther Forbes, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*
Esther Forbes, *America's Paul Revere*
Esther Forbes, *Johnny Tremain*
Robert Lawson, *Mr. Revere and I*
Belle Moses, *Paul Revere, Torch Bearer of the Revolution*
Augusta Stevenson, *Paul Revere, Boy of Old Boston*

Many of the ideas suggested in this unit were taken from the Holt Service Bulletin Number E-6, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1959.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING A UNIT IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Significance of Contemporary Poetry

Selections of contemporary poetry that deal with adolescent concerns, that approach these concerns from a viewpoint recognizable to the adolescent, and that use as their medium of expression the resources of contemporary language will open doors to experience and understanding for students.

Definition of Contemporary Poetry

Contemporary poetry may include some poetry from the nineteenth century, provided this poetry by its articulation, its choice of idiom, or its choice of subject matter is consistent with the language and concerns of this century. The poetry suggested in this unit is chiefly the work of poets whose stature has been gained or affirmed in the past twenty-five years.

Points to Consider

This suggested lesson plan is slanted toward the advanced high school students. It can be adapted to average students by changing the selections. Suggestions of poems are purposefully extensive in order to provide for the needs of any class. Levels of difficulty are indicated by asterisks: * indicates a simple poem; ** indicates a poem that is provocative but not difficult; *** indicates a difficult or very mature poem.

What is poetry?—The teacher may place on the board without comment John Ciardi's statement: "If the reader cared enough for poetry, he would have no need to study it. He would *live in it.*" He may also provide each student with a copy of Marianne Moore's poem, "Poetry." After an oral reading of the poem by the teacher, students may be asked to decide what Miss Moore is saying, whether she is in agreement with Ciardi's statement, and why people choose different ways to say the same thing. Students may be asked to consider what communication would be like if there were only one way to express every thought and every idea. Perhaps the average student would react more readily to some of Sandburg's "Ten Definitions of Poetry."

What are the basic differences in poetry and prose? Having been led to appreciate versatility of expression, students may now be asked to consider the basic differences between poetry and prose. Hopefully, they will identify these differences:

> Form—Prose uses the sentences and the paragraph; poetry uses the line, the thought phrase, the stanza.
>
> Rhythm—Prose uses the natural rhythm of speech; poetry uses the more pronounced rhythm of music.

Appeal—Prose is more likely to appeal to the intellect; poetry may reach the intellect through the emotions.

Manner of statement—Prose explains; poetry suggests.

For what is poetry useful?—This sort of question provides an opportunity for students to vent some negative reactions. Without discouraging these reactions, the teacher can point out that saying one does not like poetry because he does not like some of it is just as inconsistent as saying one does not like music because he may not like opera. Just as there are types and selections of music for everyone, so are there types and selections of poetry for everyone. Poetry, like music, is useful for the pleasure it can provide when the reader associates himself with the ideas or emotions set forth in the poetry; when such ideas and emotions are expressed in language he can understand; and when such language, apart from or because of its meaning, is used in such a way as to achieve rhythm, a principle of pleasure inherent in all of nature.

What can poetry do?—Each of the following thesis statements will lead into the teaching of specific poems. It is suggested that a discussion of technical devices or form beyond the possible identification of traditional, free, and blank verse be reserved until later.

Poetry can express mood.—The teacher may ask for students to suggest different moods, or he may place on the board his own list of the moods which most persons experience at one time or another. He will need to distinguish between mood and emotion and to point out that the mood conveyed by a specific poem may be interpreted differently by different students, all of whom must "complete the poetic dialogue" in individual ways. The list of moods might include such veins as joyous, melancholy, introspective, light-hearted, or philosophical. The teacher may need to explain that a person in philosophic mood ponders larger meanings than those which concern him personally at the moment; that it is through philosophic pursuits that one finally arrives at his sense of values and his conviction regarding ultimate meanings. The following poems, to be read by teacher and students together, may be identified as to mood.

Hardy's "Neutral Tones" (sorrowful) **
Yeats' "Broken Dreams" (melancholy) **
Frost's "Acquainted with the Night" (introspective) *
Frost's "Provide, Provide" (philosophical) **
Spender's "I Think Continually of Those Who Were Truly Great" (philosophical) **
Millay's "God's World" (joyous) *
Cummings' "What if a much of a which of a wind" (triumphant) **

Poetry can express emotions.—Again, students may be asked to supply the list of emotions, which may be written on the board for ease of recall. These poems may be included for study:

Dylan Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" (anger) **
Housman's "To an Athlete Dying Young" (disillusionment) *
Frost's "Bereft" (grief) *
Roethke's "Elegy for Jane (My student, thrown by a horse)" (grief) **
Vernon Scannell's "My Father's Face" (ambivalence of love and hate) **
Sandburg's "Explanations of Love" (love) *
Millay's "Love Is Not All" (love) *
Dickinson's "After Great Pain a Formal Feeling Comes" (grief) *
——————— "My Life Closed Twice Before Its Close" (love, grief) *

Poetry can express beauty and ugliness and can translate ugliness into beauty.

Teasdale's "Spring Night" (beauty) *
Stephen Crane's "The Heart" (ugliness) **
Sandburg's "Chicago" (ugliness into beauty) *

Poetry can be masculine or feminine.

Sandburg's "They Have Yarns" (masculine) *
Amy Lowell's "Patterns" (feminine) **
Elinor Wylie's "Let No Charitable Hope" (feminine) **
Millay's "Not in a Silver Casket Cool with Pearls" (feminine) *
Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (teacher selection of appropriate masculine passages)

Poetry can be frank and subtle.

Frost's "Mending Wall" (subtle) *
Pound's "A Pact" (frank) *

Poetry can speak of the personal or the universal.

Frost's "The Road Not Taken" (personal with universal implications) **
Countee Cullen's "Any Human to Another" (universal with personal implications) **

Poetry can give deeper meaning to everyday experiences of living.

Whitman's "There Was a Child Went Forth" *
Masters' *Spoon River Anthology* (teacher selections)
Rupert Brooke's "The Great Lover" *
Whitman's "Miracles" *
Masters' "Silence" *

Poetry can be an act of worship.

Gerard Manley Hopkins' "The Windhover" ***

James Weldon Johnson's "The Creation" *
Millay's "Renascence" **

Poetry can be fun.

Dorothy Parker's "Unfortunate Coincidence"
Arthur Guiterman's "On the Vanity of Earthly Greatness"
Richard Armour's "Money"
Ogden Nash's "Lament for a Dying Language" *** (some level of sophistication desirable)

How does poetry communicate?—Students who have learned to like poetry become interested in studying the technical aspects of the form and in comparing the technical skill of various poets. Those techniques and devices which are applicable to the poetry being studied should be introduced if the interest of the class justifies a longer unit. Each student may wish to analyze the work of his favorite poet and determine the use of forms, metrical devices, musical devices, and figurative language.

General Suggestions

Activities—Whenever possible, oral reading should be given every poem under study. Excellent recordings of contemporary poets reading their own works are available. With some of these, the listening should be postponed until after the study of the poetry as the poet's verbal mannerisms may distract attention from the poetry.

Some groups will enjoy preparing a bulletin board display of illustrated poems. The mood poems lend themselves well to abstract and impressionistic illustrations.

Those students who wish to do so should be encouraged to write original poetry. Others may simply create original figures of speech or imagistic phrases. Compositions may be based on other thesis statements which students may prove by their own choice of poetry. Such statements are infinite in number: Poetry can persuade. Poetry can capsule big moments. Poetry can relate the seemingly unrelated. Poetry can bring order out of chaos.

Evaluation—Since the development of subjective powers of appreciation and understanding has been the primary goal of the poetry study, such development must be measured subjectively rather than objectively. A short essay interpreting any one of the following poems, all of which deal with the nature of the poetic effort (poet's or reader's), might provide a synthesizing experience for the students and a means of evaluation of the unit for the teacher.

Archibald MacLeish's "Arts Poetica" ***
Philip Gardner's "Blowing the Gaff" **
Paul Engle's "To Praise a Poet: Robert Frost" *

TEACHING BIOGRAPHY

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

Biography, with its emphasis on depicting the "whole man" and the general requirement that it possess literary value, has today come into its own in interest and popularity with high school students. An adolescent may find the reading of biography more rewarding than the reading of fiction, and often times he finds it more enjoyable. To a literal student, biography is particularly impressive—to him the biographical subject has a reality that he cannot find in a fictional hero. The adolescent readily identifies with a real person who exemplifies heroism, idealism, daring deeds, and courage, sharing in his hopes, frustrations, and achievements. The study of biography, covering both biographical and autobiographical accounts, offers unlimited opportunities for references, research, allusions, historical interests, analysis, and independent study.[1]

Definition of the Genre

Biography is the life story of a person, living or dead, written by someone else; autobiography is the account of a person's life written by the person himself. Although biography is usually presented in narrative form, drama, poetry, letters, and diaries may be biographical. A biography to be valid should not be fictionalized or "sugar coated" in order to please the readers, nor should it be slanted in viewpoint. An autobiography, although more personal, may not be as objective as a well-written biography. The worth of both is that the word "hero" functions not only for world leaders, humanitarians, and other well-known figures, but also includes the triumphs of obscure persons who overcome personal problems or handicaps or who are unusual because of their beliefs or experiences. The teacher, however, should impress upon the student that all people about whom biographies are written are not heroes in the traditional concept of a hero, because biographies may concern persons who lead unusual, abnormal, or even notorious lives.

Historical Development of the Genre

The biography is a very old form of literature. The autobiography is almost as old. In the Old Testament there are numerous short biographies; for example, the story of Joseph. Each of the Christian gospels is a biographical study of Christ. The most notable of ancient biographers was the Greek writer Plutarch, in whose *Parallel Lives,* written in the first century A. D., the respective life stories of famous Greeks and Romans were compared.[2]

---

[1] Abraham Bernstein, *Teaching English in the High School,* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 262.

The intervening centuries between Plutarch and biography as it is known today brought many changes and developments. The Middle Ages saw people in Europe greatly interested in the miraculous lives of the saints. Biographies of important political figures occasionally appeared, too. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries an increased degree of curiosity about how other people thought and lived gave rise to many biographical essays, character sketches, printed funeral sermons, letters, and diaries. Emphasis seemed to shift to the individual as a secular human being.

However, it remained for Boswell to carry out the dictum of his preceptor, Samuel Johnson, that "a life must be written as it was, not as a pangerick—a praise" to give the eighteenth century its permanent place in the history of the establishment of modern biography. Boswell's powers of observation were extraordinary, and in Johnson he had one of humanity's most influential personalities to study. During the same period, the most influential autobiography of modern times appeared—Rousseau's *Confessions,* notable for the frankness with which Rousseau revealed his life and his curious insights into himself. In America Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* chronicled an American success story. Thus, both biography and autobiography had added the dimensions of modern biography—frankness, objectivity, and truthfulness.

Exhaustive scholarly research characterized the late nineteenth century with long and detailed biographies and autobiographies. Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (ten volumes), Froude's *Life of Dickens* (three volumes).

Twentieth century biographies and autobiographies are products of all these lives and methods of the past. Whether it is Helen Keller's *Story of My Life* or the Kennedy biographies, there is notable evidence of the growth of the genre, for modern biography has historical perspective as well as depth psychology and scientific method to help the writer make it the image of a man reflected in the mirror of his times. A person's shortcomings, follies, merits, and virtues are displayed with exactitude. The style of modern biography is readable and crisp; it combines Plutarch's effective use of anecdotes, Boswell's skill in character analysis and ability to reproduce vivid conversation, and the scientific demand for truth and accuracy which marked nineteenth century taste. Thus, today biography should not be fanciful but factual; realistic, not romantic;

---

[2] Alan Hollingsworth, *The Student's Handbook for the Study of Literature,* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1950), p. 45.

and it has become psychological, interpretative and introspective, scholarly, accurate, and charming.

Points to Consider

Through the reading of biography, a student finds much evidence, contrary to depressing doctrine expressed by many persons today, that the world is full of men and women strong enough "to mold events rather than to be molded by them."[3] A hoped-for insight into self and others is realized—the student learns that he is not alone in his unhappiness, his troubles, not even his strong sense of individuality.[4]

Critical evaluation in reading biography is vital. Through the study of biography, the student learns to evaluate the author's accuracy and thoroughness in covering facts, his respect for truth, and his writing—good or bad. Biography is a very hopeful starting point toward improving the student's interest and appreciation in the reading of other forms of literature. The teacher can help the student by directing his attention to the biographer's method, the content, the form, and the style of writing.

Method—The modern biographer intends to produce a work of art with as much symmetry and form as the novel. He assembles all the facts and documents before him, but he selects only the incidents which, in his judgment, best interpret the life of his subject. He always tries to keep truth before him as his goal; he does not distort facts for the sake of effect. Careful distinction should be made between expository biography and fictionalized biography, where facts, events, names, and other matters may be distorted. It should be made clear that expository biography is the account of some part of the whole of another person's life written for the sake of explaining his character, his accomplishments, and his influence. It is closely allied to criticism as a form as well as to the character sketch.

In the discussion of content and form and style, the following questions may be used.

Content

1. What kind of person is the subject?
2. What personal qualities affect his relationship with others?
3. What are the hereditary factors, both mental and physical, which help to shape the individual's life?
4. Do these factors furnish a key to the understanding of the subject's character and personality?

---

[3] Walter Loban and Rosalind A. Olmstead, *Teacher's Manual for Adventures in Appreciation*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1955), p. 127.

[4] Bernstein, p. 272.

5. What in his early life and experience led to his choice of his life's work?
6. Who were the people who influenced his life?
7. Is the environment of the subject important to the understanding of his character and personality?
8. Describe the elements of the environment, such as the home, educational experiences, religious training, work, friends, associates, hardships.
9. What is the subject's philosophy of life? his hopes? fears? ideals? ambitions?
10. Why is the subject famous, or why is he of interest to others?
11. What did he accomplish or fail to accomplish at different periods of his life?
12. In what way did these accomplishments or failures of accomplishment influence the future of the individual?
13. What were the major crises of the subject's life?
14. Could he have changed the course of his life by reacting differntly to a given situation?

Form and Style

1. Is the author's plan of presentation narrative or expository? Discuss.
2. Is there use of "flashback" technique? Explain and illustrate.
3. Are environment, characters, exposition, dialogue, and information skillfully combined to emphasize the personality of the subject?
4. What devices are used to offer a unified impression of the character, mind, and personality of the subject?
5. Is the language of the writer serious? technical? scholarly? colloquial? Prove this.
6. What are the evidences of accuracy and objectivity on the part of the author? Be specific.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *THE THREAD THAT RUNS SO TRUE* AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Jesse Stuart, a contemporary Kentucky author, will probably be familiar to most junior high school students. Since his autobiography, *The Thread That Runs So True,* is a book which can be read with ease by most students of this age, it has been chosen for consideration here. Most boys and girls will find Mr. Stuart's story interesting and enjoyable.

Preparation

In beginning the study of biography, the teacher will want to lead a discussion of well-known contemporaries. Jesse Stuart should be introduced as a Kentuckian, a former teacher, a successful writer. The students should be interested in discussing people having the greatest influence—good or bad—in our country or in the world.

The following are suggestions for other preliminary discussions and activities.

> A teacher-prepared quiz in which students are asked to identify a number of famous people in various areas—sports and entertainment, military, general adventure, science, education, the arts, politics.
>
> A teacher-led discussion of biographies and autobiographies which class members have already read, jotting down various titles on the board. The discussion should include which ones were liked and disliked and why; it should then proceed to the purposes and values of reading biography and autobiography.
>
> Student-prepared list of famous people. The fields and reasons for which these people are known should be included.
>
> A discussion of prominent Kentuckians.

Reading

The length of time required for the reading of *The Thread That Runs So True* will depend upon the individual class. Assignments for Stuart's story may be made as follows: Part I; Part II; Part III and Part IV to chapter 18; and Part IV, chapter 18 to the end of the book.

During this unit of study, the teacher may have the students read and discuss the several short selections of biography and autobiography included in the class anthology. They may also study about people and character sketches in verse found in the adopted text or read aloud from other sources.

Discussion

In addition to the general discussion about the events in the life of Jesse Stuart, the teacher should guide his students toward an understanding of the author's personality, his purpose, his method, and his form and style.

In order to understand Mr. Stuart as an individual, the students should give examples which reveal the character traits of the author. One of the first things the students will notice is that Jesse Stuart had an unusual desire for an education. He was willing to work long hours at menial tasks and to go without food if it meant that he could realize his ambition. He was optimistic and confident. This is illustrated by the fact that he entered college with less than thirty dollars in his pocket. Stuart was a determined young man. Thirty-two lawsuits during his year as superintendent of the Greenup County Schools did not stop his determination to crusade for better conditions in the schools. After this turbulent year, he published a newspaper, at his own expense, to continue his fight for school reforms. Stuart was a determined young teacher—determined to give his students the best he had to give even if it meant long hours of study and many miles of walking to obtain books for them. These are only a few of the many examples which can be used to help students understand this remarkable Kentuckian.

The author uses narration, exposition, and flashback technique to tell the story of his early educational experiences. His language is simple, direct, and emotive, reflecting the dialect of the mountain country where he was born and where he chose to live. Reading Stuart's descriptive passages—so full of color, sound, and figures of speech—is almost like reading his poetry.

The autobiographer must choose those things about himself which he feels will best serve his purpose. The students must decide what Jesse Stuart's purpose was in writing *The Thread That Runs So True.* Was his purpose only to tell about himself or did he have another reason? Why did the author describe some of the humorous and sometimes ridiculous situations in which he found himself? Why did he tell about the barefooted children who left bloody footprints in the snow? Why did he tell about the teacher whose students pushed her up the mountain's side every morning and let her down by a rope every afternoon? The students should be made to realize that the use of humor and pathos was deliberate on the part of the author. He wanted to show that education is "the thread that runs so true."

General Suggestions

Activities—Students may enjoy one or more of the following:

Reading of another of Stuart's autobiographical works or one of his novels, such as *Hie to the Hunters, The Year of My Rebirth, God's Oddling*

A "This Is Your Life" program based on the career of Jesse Stuart

A series of interviews in which students play roles of the people in Stuart's book

A panel discussion on teaching, its opportunities and obstacles, as revealed by Mr. Stuart

A dramatization of one or more incidents of the book

A group report on Mr. Stuart's love of home, county, country as revealed in his autobiography

A group discussion on the good and bad points of the book

A group discussion on how a biography of Jesse Stuart would have differed from his autobiography

A group discussion of various "plots" that run through the story and the conflicts leading to suspense

An interview with a principal or superintendent for the purpose of discovering if the reforms and changes Mr. Stuart advocated have been realized in schools today

A comparison of this book with other biographies or autobiographies

A comparison of educational opportunities in Stuart's Greenup County and educational opportunities today

A written evaluation of the autobiography

An essay on courage using examples from *The Thread That Runs So True*

An autobiographical sketch emulating the style of Jesse Stuart

Audio-visual Aids

Pictures of the author and his home at W-Hollow

News articles by and about Mr. Stuart

Record—*Biography and Autobiography* (EAV)

Display of books by Mr. Stuart

- *Harvest of Youth* (1930)
- *Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow* (1934)
- *Head o' W-Hollow* (1936)
- *Beyond Dark Hills* (1938)
- *Trees of Heaven* (1940)
- *Men of the Mountains* (1941)
- *Taps for Private Tussie* (1943)
- *Album of Destiny* (1944)
- *Mongrel Mettle* (1944)
- *Foretaste of Glory* (1946)
- *Tales from the Plum Grove* (1946)
- *The Thread That Runs So True* (1949)
- *Hie to the Hunters* (1950)
- *Clearing in the Sky* (1950)
- *Kentucky Is My Land* (1952)
- *The Beatinest Boy* (1953)
- *The Good Spirit of Laurel Ridge* (1953)
- *A Penny's Worth of Character* (1954)
- *Red Mule* (1955)
- *The Year of My Rebirth* (1956)
- *Plowshares in Heaven* (1958)
- *The Rightful Owner* (1960)
- *Andy Finds a Way* (1961)
- *God's Oddling* (1961)
- *Hold April* (1962)
- *Daughter of the Legend* (1965)

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING *YANKEE FROM OLYMPUS* AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Yankee from Olympus, by Catherine Drinker Bowen, has much to recommend it for class study. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was himself a remarkable man—intelligent, ambitious, independent, successful. Literary figures, such as Dr. Holmes, Emerson, Lowell, Longfellow, and Margaret Fuller, whom the students may know, appear in the book and become for the students real men and women. In reading the life of Holmes and his distinguished family, students are reading indirectly the history of the United States from 1800 to 1935. The biography, while it is obviously based on scholarly study, is immensely readable. It is a work of art with the structure and movement of a novel. Finally, *Yankee from Olympus* is available in paperback.

Preparation

Pictures of nineteenth century Boston and Cambridge and of the Holmes family placed on the bulletin board with some quotations from the book may be used to arouse student interest in the study of this biography. Students who saw the Hallmark production of *The Magnificent Yankee*, Emmet Lavery's play based on Holmes' years in Washington, may tell the class about the television version. With other groups, a provocative question related to the father-son relationship may create the interest needed.

Student reports on the following subjects will also help to introduce the unit of study:

- Catherine Drinker Bowen
- An article on the problems of the biographer, such as Iris Origo's "Biography, True and False," *The Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1959
- A general article on Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.
- A general article on Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Reading

The whole book may be read before discussion begins. However, as the book is divided into six parts, class discussion may follow Parts I and II, and III and IV, and V and VI or Parts I-III and IV-V . Students may be given a teacher-prepared guide sheet on *Yankee from Olympus*, or the teacher may use the questions included in the preceding section, TEACHING BIOGRAPHY: General Plan. In some way the students must be directed to essentials as they read in order to prevent their becoming lost in the mass of details.

Discussion—The teacher will follow his own method of discussing the book. The possibilities for discussion are unlimited. Some of the points which may be included follow.

Character—Mrs. Bowen seeks "to ungrave this man, stand him upright, see him walk, jump, dance, tell jokes, make love, display his vanity or his courage as the case might be."[5] She succeeds by showing "not noble public posture but characteristic brief turns of phrase, small oddities and manners that belonged to Holmes and to Holmes alone."[6] Discussion should uncover some example of the way in which the author makes Holmes come alive for the reader.

Among Justice Holmes' characteristics several might be pointed out. His love of and respect for knowledge can be seen throughout his life, from his discovery of Plato to his visit with President Roosevelt just before his death. His independence is revealed in his attitude toward his father, his choice of career, and his dissenting decisions. The way in which he worked on the new edition of Kent's *Commentaries* reveals his intensity when pursuing a goal. Holmes called himself an "internal man"; yet he loved life and believed in action. He himself said, "It is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his time at peril of being judged never to have lived."

Holmes was a man of vision and a pioneer in the field of historical jurisprudence. Students must be helped to see, running through all Holmes' important decisions, his belief that law was not logic but experience, "the felt necessities of the time."

Mrs. Bowen gives the reader Holmes' background for two generations because she believes that Justice Holmes "was a man whose presence carried tradition." Students should be asked what characteristics and attitudes of Justice Holmes can also be found in Abiel Holmes and Dr. Holmes.

Mrs. Bowen portrays vividly the tensions between Justice Holmes and his father. In a sense Holmes seems to be molded by his impulse to be different from his father. After examining the conflict, students may be asked to point out parallels in Dr. Holmes' relationship with his own father.

Setting—In *Adventures of a Biographer* Mrs. Bowen says Holmes "took his spiritual sustenance from Boston, Cambridge, New England.[7] In *Yankee from Olympus* she evokes a strong sense of place. Students, who often think setting means only time and place, should examine the social customs, attitudes, traditions, and morés of "proper Bostonians" which were Holmes' inheritance.

---

[5] Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Adventures of a Biographer*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946), p. 47.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Title—The title is taken from Elizabeth Shipley Sergeant's essay on Justice Holmes in *Fire under the Andes*: "Here is a Yankee, strayed from Olympus." Holmes was a yankee both in geography and in spirit. "From Olympus," the mountain on which the Greek gods dwelt, suggests Holmes' intellectual and social heritage.

Theme—*Yankee from Olympus* shows in Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes the flowering of a long family tradition. "These Holmes men did not stand still, they grew. This book is concerned with the impetus behind that growth," says the author in her Foreword. The theme is repeated often: "There was indeed a great contagion in this courage—a courage not born with Holmes but handed down with all the accumlated force, the deep spiritual persuasion, of the generations behind him."

Structure—This book begins with details of Justice Holmes' grandfather's life, moves next to the life of his father, and is nearly one-quarter through before Justice Holmes becomes the center of attention. The book carries the sub-title "Justice Holmes and His Family." Mrs. Bowen herself says that his inheritance "balanced him as the nine tenths of the iceberg we do not see balances that glittering pinnacle." Her purpose is to show Justice Holmes in the light of his heritage.

The material is presented chronologically, and the author relies heavily on anecdote to reveal her subject. The work flows like a novel. Although the scope is broad, the author's sense of proportion is good.

An outstanding feature of this biography is that the events are kept always in historical persepective. The author's method is to summarize briefly historical events surrounding the activities of the Holmes family.

The theme gives the work unity. At climactic moments Mrs. Bowen repeats phrases which serve as literary leitmotifs.

Style—The tone is warm and sympathetic without too much sentiment. It is never formal or severe. The pace is rapid; the prose, crisp and readable. Although she is dealing with an intellectual and a lawyer, Mrs. Bowen always makes her subject intelligible to the layman.

Method—The notes, materials and sources, and the two chapters in *Adventures of a Biographer* suggest that *Yankee from Olympus* is a scholarly study. Yet Mrs. Bowen is working within the framework of semi-fictionalized biography. In her "attempt to bring Justice Holmes out of legal terms into human terms," she has elaborated upon her sources. She has invented details of actions, gestures, thoughts, and conversation, as she explains in "A Word about Method." The strongest objection of the critics to this book is that the reader cannot tell when the author is reporting facts and when she is conjecturing.

General Suggestions

Writing Activities—Students may write a theme on one of the following subjects:

A character sketch of Dr. Holmes, Justice Holmes, Fanny Holmes, or Uncle John

The Holmes Women

The Yankee

Father and Son—A Contrast

Education at Harvard

Changing Attitudes Toward Religion

Holmes' Philosophy of Law

Boston Attitudes

Speaking Activities

An oral report on Catherine Drinker Bowen's *Adventures of a Biographer*, pp. 43-77.

Oral reports on reviews of *Yankee from Olympus, Book Review Digest*, 1944.

Oral reports on significant historical events and personages—Jefferson and the Embargo, Madison, Jackson, Webster, Brandeis, Brook Farm, Fruitlands, Free Soilers, Missouri Compromise, Ball's Bluff, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Sherman Anti-Trust Act, Fourteenth Amendment.

Supplementary Reading

Catherine Drinker Bowen, *John Adams and the American Revolution*

Mark DeWolfe Howe, *Justice Holmes: The Shaping Years,* 1841-1870

Mark DeWolfe Howe, *Justice Holmes: The Proving* Years, 1870-1882

Emmet Lavery, *The Magnificent Yankee*

Vocabulary—Vocabulary study might include such concepts as Puritanism, Calvinism, Unitarianism, Transcendentalism, pragmatism, the common law. The book contains many allusions with which the students will also need help: Copley, Stuart, Chippendale, Lemerie, Sevres, Jacobinism, the Yard, the Common, the Pole, Gadarene swine, Beacon Hill.

Evaluation—The final evaluation may take the form of the answer to an essay question. The student should be given some choice. The following are three suggestions:

1. Mrs. Bowen says of Holmes: "If the significance of his life lay wholly in his legal achievements, there would be no place for a biography written by a layman. If its significance lay wholly in its written words, there would be no place for a biography at all. But Holmes' greatness lay most of all in his manner of meeting life. He had a genius for living. . . ."

   In what ways does *Yankee from Olympus* demonstrate Holmes' "genius for living"?

2. In *Adventures of a Biographer* Mrs. Bowen says: ". . . . Holmes' fate and the business of his life seemed tied to his country, inseparable from it." Holmes himself said, "It is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his time at peril of being judged never to have lived."

   How does *Yankee from Olympus* support this idea?

3. Biography, unlike history, is a branch of literature; like any work of art it is a consciously planned composition. After reading all his sources and weighing all the evidence, the biographer gradually develops a theme. Around this theme he structures his book; from this theme arises the unity of the book.

   What is the theme of *Yankee from Olympus*? Show how Mrs. Bowen uses the theme to give pattern, direction, and unity to her book.

TEACHING THE ESSAY

GENERAL PLAN

Significance

Essays provide materials for students of all interests. They offer new ideas, information, and points of view. Teaching the essay provides the teacher with the opportunity to develop skills in reading and organizing and with a springboard for composition exercises.

History and Definition of the Genre

Although many parts of the Bible and various writings of the Greeks and Romans might be considered essays, the French writer Montaigne is credited with creating the literary form called the essay, from *essai*, a trial or attempt. The essay is a short piece of nonfiction which presents a personal point of view on some subject. Its length, scope, and structure depend on the intention of the essayist. Since it is the expression of a personality, style is important.

There are two kinds of essays, formal and informal or personal. An essay may fall anywhere between formal and informal. The formal essay may be recognized by certain characteristics:

1. It is objective, serious, and instructive and demands orderly presentation.
2. Its subject matter is of the first importance.
3. Its subject matter may be classified as philosophical or reflective, critical, scientific, editorial, or controversial.[1]

---

[1] Louisville Public Schools, *Curriculum Guide, Language Arts, Senior High High School,* (Louisville: Office of Curriculum, Louisville Public Schools, 1958), p. 193.

The informal essay may be recognized by certain characteristics:

1. It is personal, interesting, and conversational and wanders at will.
2. Its style and mood are important factors.
3. It attempts to present an idea in an unusual manner.
4. It aims to give pleasure or enjoyment.
5. Its subject matter deals with the commonplace—persons, pets, personal experiences, places, and reminiscences.[2]

Points to Consider

Introduction—An essay may be introduced by a discussion of the subject dealt with, establishing its importance and what the students already know about it, or, when appropriate, significant facts of the author's life may be used to arouse student interest.

Reading—Reading an informal essay is much like reading fiction, while reading the formal essay "requires logical thinking and recognition of patterns of organization in expository discourse."[3] The teacher may furnish students with outlines of difficult essays to help them with their reading.

Analysis—The analysis of the essay should deal first with content and then method. The following general questions may prove helpful in a discussion of these matters.

> What is the purpose of the author? to amuse and entertain? to reminisce? to inform? to indoctrinate and persuade? to criticize? to ridicule?
>
> What is his central idea or theme?
>
> By what methods does he develop his idea? What types of transitions does he use?
>
> What is the author's tone? ironic? sarcastic? angry? friendly? sentimental? whimsical humorous? formal? didactic? informal? rambling? chatty?
>
> Is the writer's language appropriate to the content and purpose? Identify figurative language, slanted or loaded words, and literary allusions.
>
> Analyze sentences for length, variety, balance, development, and flow. Point out some which seem particularly forceful.
>
> How does the author's purpose influence his type of essay and tone and style?
>
> What reflections of the writer's personality and attitudes do you find?[4]

---

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[3] Dwight L. Burton, *Literature Study in the High School*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1964), p. 201.

[4] Edith M. Rideout, *Essays of the 20th Century*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1962), pp. xv-xvi.

General Suggestions

Motivation—Since essays have been written on just any subject, the teacher may easily capitalize on student interests. Essays are often less popular with students than fiction. For this reason it is perhaps better to use the essay with poetry, short stories, novels, or plays in a unit centered on a theme rather than to spend a long period of time on the essay.

Supplementary Reading—Following the reading and analysis of an essay, the students may be directed to other essays on the same subject for comparison of points of view or to see what earlier writers have said on the same subject. Or they may be directed to other essays by the same author.

Writing Assignments—The essay may be "extremely valuable as a springboard for student writing. This is true especially of the personal essay that deals with the seeming trivialities, the small awarenesses of living. Currently, this form of writing is largely relegated to newspaper and magazine columns and 'departments.' It is the mark of the immature adolescent to think that he has nothing worth writing about unless he has undergone harrowing adventure. His reading of informal essays may cause him to reflect, and thus to be prepared to write, on the everyday details of his own existence. And in this lies one pathway to maturity."[5]

After the analysis of the style or organization of a formal essay, students may write essays of their own demonstrating their grasp of the method of organization or in imitation of the style.

Other Activities—Below are listed some activities which may accompany the study of the essay:

> View the motion picture, *Literature Appreciation: How to Read Essays.*
>
> From collections of essays, magazines, or newspapers, find an essay that would be classified as informal. After reading the essay, give the following information on a three-by-five index card:
>
> 1. Title
> 2. Author
> 3. Source
> 4. Theme (central idea)
> 5. Mood (impression conveyed)
> 6. Items of style noted, such as wit, humor satire, enthusiasm, and exaggeration.[6]

---

[5] Burton, p. 201.

[6] Louisville Public Schools, *Curriculum Guide, Language Arts, Senior High School,* (Louisville: Office of Curriculum, Louisville Public Schools, 1958), p. 192.

From collections of essays, magazines, or newspapers, find a formal essay. After reading the essay, on a sheet of paper list the title, author, source, and type of subject matter. Outline the essay.[7]

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "EVERY DOG SHOULD OWN A MAN" AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Introduction

"Every Dog Should Own a Man," by Corey Ford, will appeal to junior high school students because of its subject and its humor. The teacher may introduce the essay by directing the students' attention to the title. The discussion should establish the author's unexpected twisting of ideas to achieve humor. Students may be asked to watch for other such twists of familiar sayings or situations as they read.

Reading

After the above preparation, students should be able to read the essay with appreciation.

Analysis

Purpose—Students will see quickly Ford's purpose is to amuse or entertain.

Theme—Every dog should have a man of his own—here is some advice for dogs on training men. The theme is stated in the first paragraph.

Method of Development—After his opening generalization the author develops his idea by use of details. Students should be asked to locate these details. The teacher may call attention to the transitional words and phrases ("For example," "The first problem," "The main things," "The next question") which signal new details.

Tone—The tone of the essay is whimsical.

Language—The language is that of general English. Students should be asked to point out examples of humor that arise from the vocabulary ("Man-tired,' "manhandling," "dog-shy") and from Ford's turning familiar sayings around ("a man can be a dog's best friend" and "it's hard to teach an old man new tricks").

Sentence Structure—Unless this essay is being compared with a formal essay, the sentence structure merits no discussion.

Influence of Purpose on Type of Essay, Tone, and Style—Since Ford's purpose is to amuse, the essay is informal in tone and style.

Writer's Personality—Ford seems to understand dogs well. The reader also feels that he thoroughly enjoyed writing the essay.

---

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

General Suggestions

Supplementary Reading—Students may be asked to read other humorous essays for a study and comparison of authors' techniques of achieving humor.

Writing Activities—Students may enjoy writing an informal essay imitating the approach Ford uses in this essay.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "SHOOTING AN ELEPHANT" AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Introduction

George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" is a well-written essay which will appeal to students for the story it tells. The teacher may either give the background information or assign student reports on Orwell's early life, British imperialism, and Burma's relation to England in the 1920's.

Reading

Since this essay is primarily a narrative, students should have no particular difficulty reading it. The teacher may direct the students' reading by asking them to watch for the idea behind the story Orwell tells.

Analysis

Purpose—Students will see that Orwell's purpose is to recount an interesting experience. They may not see the real purpose of persuading behind the more obvious purpose.

Theme—The significance of the incident narrated by Orwell becomes apparent when the student considers the intent of such statements as "For at that time I had already made up my mind that imperialism was an evil thing. . . ." and "I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys." Application of the theme to students' own experiences can be made by asking if they have ever faced the dilemma of having to do something against their will because it was expected of them. What is moral courage?

Method of Development—Orwell develops his thesis by using one specific illustration. Students should be able to locate the transitional sentence beginning "It was a tiny incident in itself. . . ." in which Orwell tells the reader what he is going to do.

As an example of development of an idea by use of details, students may be asked to examine the first paragraph.

Tone—The tone of Orwell's essay is informal. (See language and sentence structure below.)

Language—The vocabulary is that of general English and includes some colloquial terms. Many constructions reflect those of speech: "I was all for the Burmese," "I had already made up my mind," and "No one had the guts to raise a riot."

Orwell's descriptions are especially vivid. Consider the description of the dead coolie, the shooting of the elephant, and the elephant's death. Students should be able to point out specific words and phrases which make these descriptions memorable.

After considering the meaning of "He wears a mask and his face grows to fit it," students may be asked to find other examples of figurative language.

Sentence Structure—The sentences flow smoothly without long interrupting phrases or involved movement. It is easy, graceful narrative, broken only by personal observations of the author.

Influence of Purpose on Type of Essay, Tone, and Style—Since Orwell is recounting personal experience, his essay is informal in tone and style.

Writer's Personality—Orwell appears very human as he candidly admits the real motives for his actions and his hatred of his job and the Burmese who baited him. A discussion of the theme may lead to further discussion of his social and political writings, *Animal Farm* and *1984*, which many students will have read.

General Suggestions

Supplementary Reading—Emerson's *"Self-Reliance"*

Writing—After a discussion of the organization of the essay, students may be asked to write a theme which develops its central idea by a narrative.

TEACHING THE ARTICLE

Significance

The article is found in columns, features, departments of magazines, newspapers, reviews, and periodicals. To satisfy the expectations of the general reader, the article must be brief, interesting, timely, and meaningful.

Definition of the Genre

The article is a short piece of non-fiction based on fact. It is a composition on a specific topic written by a knowledgeable person. Its chief purpose is to inform the reader. Style is of less importance in the article than in the essay.

In recent years the article of information has replaced to a great degree the highly literary, reflective essay. Perhaps man's awareness that he can use facts to his own advancement is somewhat responsible for this keen interest in the informative article. The editors of a Scott Foresman anthology conclude their discussion of the article by giving it a secure and necessary place in modern life:

> Finally, in order to make intelligent decisions or even intelligent conversation in a culture in which knowledge is both complex and specialized, we demand writing that will give us up-to-date, factual information easily and quickly.[1]

Points to Consider

Discussion should center first on content, secondly on matters of form and style.

Content—The subject being discussed, the ideas of the composition, and the author's purpose should be first considered. These should be kept in mind as the reader follows the information presented by the author in support of his thesis. The recommendations of the author, if any, should be noted.

Form—Consideration of the organization and structure of the article should follow. A study of the introductory section will probably reveal the central theme—stated or implied. One may note whether the theme is developed by example, specific illustration, details, reasons, argument. Whether the author has achieved unity through his development should be considered. The coherence of the article can be tested in the transition from one element to another. The conclusion may repeat the central idea of the article or it may inspire further study of the main idea.

Style—The reader should also be aware of the style in which the article is presented. Basically the article is expository. The information may be presented in a serious, technical, scholarly manner; or it may be informal, conversational, or even humorous. These effects vary according to the author's use of formal or informal diction, colloquial expressions, technical vocabulary, figurative language, literary allusions. The reader should see a connection between the author's purpose and style in the article.

General Suggestions

Audio-visual Aids—Bulletin board displays, slides, recordings may precede or follow the presentation of the article.

Adaptation to Levels—If the class is below average, the teacher may read the introductory paragraphs with the students and make short oral or silent reading assignments in class of each section rather than of the whole article. A topic outline of the article or a list of questions may also prove helpful. A superior class may compare the articles assigned with others on the same subject.

---

[1] Walter Blair, et al. *The United States in Literature,* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963), p. 613.

Motivation—The more closely a subject can be associated with the students' experiences and ambitions, the more meaningful the article will be to them. A general discussion of the subject to be assigned may be helpful in motivating students.

Evaluation—Check tests of comprehension of content may follow the reading and precede the discussion of each article. Summary sentences of main ideas of a number of articles may be written at the end of a unit on the article.

Supplementary Reading—Using the *Readers' Guide,* students may locate other atricles on the same subject. Other articles by the same author may be helpful in a study of form and style.

Writing Assignments—Compositions, related in content to the subject of the article, may be written. One provocative sentence from the article being studied may be chosen as the topic of an original theme. Summary sentences of the main ideas of a number of articles may be written. Outlining may well be taught in connection with the study of the article.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "SEVEN WONDERS OF AMERICAN ENGINEERING" AT THE JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL

Introduction

In "Seven Wonders of American Engineering," Ira Wolpert informs the reader of the monumental engineering feats performed in the construction of such projects as the Panama Canal and Boulder Dam.

Preparation

A discussion of civil engineering projects in our own cities and state—expressways, flood walls, McAlpine Dam, Barkley Dam—may well precede the assignment. The class may then share what they have previously read or seen about any of the seven projects to be covered in the article. Following this, an able class may be expected to read the article as a home assignment; a slower group may read and discuss the article in sections.

Points to Consider

Content—The "seven modern civil-engineering wonders of the United States" are being discussed. The idea of the piece is to inform the reader of the great problems met and solved in building what are recognized as the greatest engineering feats in the United States. The author's purpose is to show that in each of these seven engineering wonders man has indeed "taken the greatest liberty with nature" and subjugated nature to a practical use for man's benefit. Information which the author presents to his reader includes the method of selecting the seven engineering wonders, the reason for selecting only seven wonders, and the criteria for the selection. Considering each of the seven wonders separately, Wolpert states its purpose, the difficulties in its construction, and its unique features.

The article seems to be addressed to the general reader. Perhaps it would be of greater significance to a reader of scientific bent or to one who has visited some of the places mentioned. However, the vocabulary is not technical.

Form—The introductory section states the subject. The central theme is implied in the first two paragraphs. The author develops his theme by illustration and detail. In describing each of the engineering feats, the author gives an idea of its magnitude, usefulness, the ingenuity in its construction, the seemingly insurmountable obstacles that were overcome. He also states the location of the project, the approximate time of construction, and the approximate cost. All of these details in each illustration bear directly on the central theme. Thus unity is achieved.

Transitions from one element to another are clearly established. This is done by showing, for example, in the introduction to the consideration of the Empire State Building a relationship with the preceding section on the Panama Canal. A specific reference to a comparison in subject and in time is made: "In less than twenty years, the trades that had learned in Panama to move mountains perfected the way to build them" in constructing the Empire State Building. Later, a relationship in location of two of the engineering wonders occurs: "On the other side of the continent from New York" (Empire State Building) "is . . . Grand Coulee Dam. . . ." The conclusion repeats the central idea of the article.

Style—The tone of the article is light and informal. Colloquial expressions such as the following appeal to junior high school students: "Let the hobby model makers chew this one over"; ". . . almost as high as the Eiffel Tower would be if it perched on top of Washington Monument." Use of the second person pronoun and editorial questions give this article a conversational tone: "You wonder what manner of men it was who conceived the possibility of building it." "How do you dig a hole deeper than any bridge builders had ever attempted and fill it with more concrete than was used on the Empire State Building, all this in a swift current in the middle of one of the world's busiest harbors rushed over by storms and tides?" Simple figurative language relates difficult conceptions to the world of the younger reader: "The generations speed on each other's heels like racing cars." ". . . a pyramid that stands only a hundred feet higher than the greatest of the Egyptian pyramids . . . could wear Cheops for a watch fob." Literary allusions challenge the able reader: "Tourists come in great numbers to see this Brobdingnagian drop kick that saves Grand Coulee from washing down the river." "But one of the Herculean feats it had to perform . . . was to pump water 360 feet up from the dam into a river-sized canal. . . ."

General Suggestions

Supplementary Reading–The teacher may assign reference work on such subjects as Antipater of Sidon, the seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Eiffel Tower, Parker Dam. He may require further information about any or all of these seven modern engineering wonders.

Writing Activities–The teacher may choose a paragraph from the article, well-constructed for his purpose, and exemplify such parts of it as topic sentence and method of development: details, reasons, illustration.

The class may develop an outline of two or three consecutive paragraphs.

A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TEACHING "YOUR OLDEST HEIRLOOMS" AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Introduction

"Your Oldest Heirlooms," by William L. White, is an article on the similarities in common words used by peoples of different nationalities. Because of the increasing interest in the science of linguistics as a basis for the teaching of modern grammar, this article on the development of language is timely.

Preparation

Students enrolled in language courses may be asked to give translations from languages they are studying for such words as *God, mother, father, is.* These translations should be listed on the chalkboard. Similarities, immediately noticeable in Latin, French, Spanish, German, will interest the class in reading the article.

If the class has studied *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* the argument between Huck and Jim in Chapter XIV about the difference between a Frenchman's language and our own may be read aloud.

Points to Consider

Content–The subject being discussed is the similarity of sound symbols in common words used by peoples widely separated by distance and time. The ideas of the composition are that these languages stem perhaps "from some common language far back before recorded history," and that a Law of Language Changes permits comparisons between languages and a reconstruction of the ancestor language. The purpose of the author is to interest the general reader in developments in language and in inferences made from the study of language concerning the lives of the people who spoke it. He gives many specific examples of similarity of words in different languages and points out the significance of Grimm's Law of Language Changes. The author concludes with a suggestion of man's eternal interest in the mysteries of his earliest beginnings.

Form—The introductory paragraph states the subject. The central theme is stated in the second paragraph. The author develops his thesis by presenting many specific examples of similarities in words used by different nationalities and many specific details about the way of life revealed in these languages. Because these examples and details bear directly on the central theme, unity is achieved.

Style—The subject of "Your Oldest Heirlooms" is a scholarly one. Its dignified but conversational tone, however, makes it generally readable and personally interesting. This informal presentation is achieved by the author's regular use of figurative language, first and second person, editorial questions, and colloquial expressions.

In simple figurative language the author personalizes the subject of language development by referring metaphorically in his title to familiar words as "Your Oldest Heirlooms." Literary allusion as well as metaphor is found in this sentence: "Using as our magic carpet those words which are ours and were theirs, let us fly back thousands of years to look at that first Indo-European tribe." Linguists are referred to as "dictionary-detectives," "word-detectives."

First and second person are used in these editorial questions: "What are your oldest heirlooms?" (Opening sentence) "Where did these ancestors of ours live?" In the concluding sentence, the reader is again personally addressed, "Be sure that these Indo-European speech ancestors of ours must have pondered the dim mysteries of their own beginnings, even as do you (yu)!"

These colloquial expressions may be pointed out: "scholars puzzled over"; "it dawned on scholars"; "We can be sure not."

General Suggestions

Visual Aid—A large map or chalkboard drawing on which the Indo-European countries mentioned are labeled would be extremely helpful. Branches of the Indo-European ancestor language—Latin, Germanic, Celtic, Slavic—could be indicated by different colors.

Supplementary Reading—Using the *Readers' Guide*, an advanced class may locate other articles on language development and report findings. In their reading, students should compare purpose, tone, style as well as content.

BOOK REPORTS

There are probably as many different kinds of book reports as there are teachers of English. To a large extent, the kind of book report depends upon the individual class or teacher and upon the purpose for which the book report is assigned. Major purposes of book reports are to give the student an opportunity to share his book with others; to give the student an opportunity to learn about books from other students; and to give the teacher an opportunity to evaluate the reading done by students.

Many teachers are content with a simple cumulative list of books read by a student during his high school career. Some prefer a simple account written on a 3 x 5 index card, and others like informal chats with students to discuss the books which students have read outside of class.

Stereotyped book reports are likely to discourage reading and reading enjoyment. These should be discouraged. Formal book "reviews" should be required only of intellectually mature students.

Certainly the teacher will want to provide opportunity for selection, flexibility, and creativity in the preparation of book reports. Whenever possible, students should be allowed some choice in the kind of report they do.

The following suggestions may be utilized by teachers who want a specific kind of book report. Possibilities are endless, and these ideas undoubtedly will precipitate others.

WRITTEN BOOK REPORTS

1. Write a character analysis of a favorite character.
2. List and describe some of the most exciting episodes of the book.
3. Write a letter of appreciation to the author.
4. Assume the role of the author of your book and write a letter to a publisher persuading him to publish your book.
5. Convince a friend by letter to read the book.
6. Write a letter to one of the characters.
7. Summarize the story from the viewpoint of a particular character.
8. Write a description of the events that made the deepest impression.
9. Describe an incident that you regard as particularly brave or heroic, humorous or pathetic, etc.

10. Analyze critically the style.
11. Relate the historical background of the story.
12. Prepare an outline of a movie scenario of the book.
13. Compose advertisements of the book.
14. Compose advertisements based on incidents of the book.
15. Write a newspaper story based on incidents of the book.
16. Devise an alternate ending.
17. Write a short additional chapter.
18. Assume the role of one character and write several diary entries.
19. Write a blurb to put on the book jacket.
20. Write an opinion of the book; include an over-all evaluation and what you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses.
21. Compare and/or contrast the book with other books by the same author or books of a similar nature.
22. Write a formal book review, emulating the style found in reputable newspapers and magazines.

ORAL BOOK REPORTS

1. Summarize the part of the book you like best.
2. As a group, conduct a panel discussion on different phases of the book.
3. Dramatize a chapter or incident.
4. Conduct a group discussion of several books by the same author or of books that are similar in some way.
5. Evaluate the book for your classmates.
6. Summarize the story from the viewpoint of the main character or another character.
7. Assume the role of the author of the book and be interviewed by classmates.
8. Present a sales "pitch" for your book.
9. Re-tell an exciting incident, a humorous incident, etc.
10. Introduce the major characters and include a few special characteristics of each.
11. Dramatize and present the climax of the story (or another section).
12. Present a group performance in the style of "This Is Your Life." (This is recommended especially for biographies and autobiographies.)
13. Dramatize an interview between a character and a reporter.

14. Dramatize an interview between the author of the book and a representative of a publishing company.

"CREATIVE" BOOK REPORTS

1. Draw a jacket cover for your book. Include the blurb, as well as biographical information about the author, on the back of the jacket.
2. Write an analysis of the book by a "man of the future."
3. Construct sets of the scenes. Explain.
4. Make a list of all kinds of letters which might be written by characters in the story. Do the same with telegrams.
5. Compose a cross-word puzzle based on characters and incidents of the book.
6. Write a book report in verse.
7. Plan a quiz program on a book that all members of the class have read.
8. Plan and present interviews: author; two characters in the story; you and a character; you and a friend about the book.

GENRE REPORTS

Novel

Choose from among these questions:

1. Select the character who has been most skillfully drawn and defend your choice.
2. Describe the denouement and account for your selection of this scene.
3. Place the novel in a particular literary period and enumerate the characteristics which make it a part of this period.
4. What devices are used to create suspense?
5. What is the significance of the setting?

Biography or Autobiography

1. List the outstanding contributions of the subject.
2. Enumerate the names of the persons who influenced him and describe this influence.
3. Enumerate his outstanding character traits and give examples of each.
4. Evaluate the book for your classmates.

Drama

1. Would you classify the play as comedy or tragedy? Explain your answer.
2. What is the basic conflict of the play? How is it resolved? What devices does the playwright utilize to maintain suspense?
3. Identify the protagonist and the antagonist. Discuss their roles.
4. How are minor characters used?
5. Discuss any unanswered questions or unsolved problems in the play.

Historical Fiction

1. Illustrate specifically the author's familiarity with the period. Include examples of actual historical events.
2. Choose one major character and one minor character and write a paragraph about each.
3. If there are any actual persons used as characters, compare their delineation in the book with historical accounts. If all characters are fictional, how does the author make them seem real?
4. Tell of one particularly dramatic or significant episode of the book.
5. Evaluate the book in terms of its readability and information provided in regard to time and place setting.

A REPORT FOR THE SLOW LEARNER

1. Give the name of the book and the author.
2. Tell when and where the story takes place.
3. What is the conflict of the story? What happens at the end? Tell why you like or dislike the ending.
4. Choose three (or more) characters and write a sentence or two about each.
5. Tell specifically what you liked and disliked about the book.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bernstein, Abraham. *Teaching English in High School.* New York: Random House, 1961.

Bowen, Catherine (Drinker). *The Writing of Biography.* Boston: The Writer, 1951.

Boynton, Robert W., and Maynard Mack. *Introduction to the Short Story.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959.

Burton, Dwight L. *Literature Study in the High School,* Revised Edition. New York: Holt, 1964.

Davenport, William H., and Ben Siegel. *Biography, Past and Present.* New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1965.

Gordon, Edward J., and E. S. Noyes, eds. *Essays on the Teaching of English: Reports on the Yale Conferences on the Teaching of English.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960.

Guth, Hans P. *English Today and Tomorrow.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

Hook, J. N. *Teaching of High School English,* Third Edition, New York: Ronald Press, 1965.

LaBrant, Lou. *We Teach English.* New York: Harcourt, 1951.

Lewis, J. S., and Jean C. Sisk. *Teaching English,* 7-12. New York: American Book Company, 1963.

Loban, Walter, et al. *Teaching Language and Literature, Grades 7-12.* New York: Harcourt, 1961.

Pooley, R. C., ed. *Perspectives on English*: *Essays to Honor W. William Hatfield.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960.

Rideout, Edith M. *Essays of the 20th Century.* New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1962.

Roberts, Edgar V. *Writing Themes About Literature.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

Ryan, Margaret. *Teaching the Novel in Paperback.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963.

Sauer, Edwin H. *English in the Secondary School.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961.

Sweetkind, Morris. *Teaching Poetry in the High School.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964.

Wolfe, Don M. *Creative Ways to Teach English*: *Grades* 7-12. New York: Odyssey Press, 1958.